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Die 14 *Martii*, 1921.

Matters of Moment

BY REV. JOHN McCABE

With a Preface by THE BISHOP OF NORTHAMPTON

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"Veritatum facientes in caritate crescamus in Illo."
Ad Ephesius.

"But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him."

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PREFACE

MANY years ago, at a clergy retreat, a distinguished Jesuit Father strongly exhorted us to cultivate "professional ambition" in the matter of preaching.

It sounded almost unorthodox, because all our spiritual guides were wont to harp upon the need of humility in that particular office. But the conviction has grown upon me that, in the case of the parochial clergy at least, the lack of laudable ambition is a far commoner danger than any silly self-complacency in the pulpit. Few men in fact have the necessary gifts for "showing off" to advantage, and the few who may think they have are held in check by the apathy of the average congregation and the undisguised raillery of their brethren. Preaching is usually regarded as penance by "pulpit and pew" alike.

Yet sermons ought not to be, and need not be, a bugbear. They ought not to be, because "the ministry of the Word" is among the highest and most exclusive offices of the priesthood. They need not be, because men and women of all degrees still crowd as eagerly as ever to hear renowned preachers. Lord Fisher, as we have recently read with some surprise, counted "sermons and dancing" among

his chief recreations; but, of course, he picked his preachers with the same discrimination as his partners.

The root cause of so much indifferent preaching, if one may venture an opinion, is the almost total neglect of technical training in the subject at our seminaries. In ancient days, rhetoric used to be considered an indispensable accomplishment of every educated man: in our days, it has come to be regarded as a synonym for all that is vulgar and artificial. With a severely critical audience it seems to carry weight to "hum and haw," to be mostly inaudible, and to leave sentences unfinished; while it rouses suspicion to be fluent or ornate, and to lapse into fervid oratory is to write oneself down a mountebank. Why? We have not ceased to exact the most laborious preparation for the concert-platform or the stage. Yet we do not hesitate to send a young priest to face a congregation without any real tuition whatsoever. He has probably written no more than half a dozen sermons, and delivered them from memory in a classroom before his fellow-students. The result, when he makes his first public appearance, is a painful ordeal for everybody. He is manifestly scared. He does not know how to pitch or vary his voice. His hands are an embarrassment to him. He sways about like a seaman in a storm. His enunciation is so imperfect that, make as much noise as he may, only disjointed phrases carry any

meaning to the ear. Altogether, he is conscious, poor fellow, of having made a very indifferent display, so indifferent that if he were an actor or a singer he would be mercilessly hissed. It is not his fault; but it is certainly his misfortune. Is it any wonder if, after such agonised experiences, a priest concludes that it is useless to attempt that for which he has no natural aptitude, shirks the ungrateful task whenever he can, and is content to discharge it, when he must, in a slipshod fashion?

"Professional ambition" in the individual is all we have to look to for improvement in our preaching until systematic professional training is provided in our seminaries. Accordingly preachers deserve every encouragement who, like the author of these selections, take extraordinary pains to make their "ministry of the Word" as worthy as possible. Nearly all the discourses in this volume were delivered, if I am not mistaken, in the same church, and to mostly the same audience. Only those who have gone through it can fully appreciate the effort required to maintain, week after week, under such conditions, a high standard of freshness and vigour. Very wisely the preacher has often given a "topical" flavour to his subject-matter, seeking to lead his hearers on from the terrible and engrossing events of the war to spiritual truths; yet every problem is envisaged from the Catholic standpoint, and is solved by the application of Catholic principles. The

Church, as the only Ark of Refuge from the calamities of the times; the Holy Eucharist, both as Sacrifice and Sacrament, the source of strength to achieve and patience to endure; devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, the inexhaustible fountain of comfort for the sorrowful—these and similar correlated dogmas were the distinctive and almost exclusive "war-work" of Catholics, the very necessary supplement to the corporal works of mercy (in which, for the rest, we had our full share), and worthy to receive, as they do in these pages, a permanent record.

I wish the author and his readers every blessing.

✠ F. W., Bishop of Northampton.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

"MATTERS OF MOMENT" are a collection of short souvenirs of sermons preached from Sunday to Sunday in a small mission in the North of England. They are of their nature, therefore, more suggestive than exhaustive. It is only a thought here and there that is often recorded. They are sometimes condensations of a subject developed at length in the course of the sermon. People don't like long sermons nowadays, whether preached from the pulpit or reported in the press. The matter of religion does not suffer any change. Its form is capable of infinite variety. *Non nova sed nove* is an excellent guide. Each individual expression of our immutable dogma may bring one more stone, be it ever so humble, to the work of evolution of the Grand Temple of Truth.

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MATTERS OF MOMENT

THE ONLY MEDIATOR

"JESUS CHRIST, yesterday, to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8).

These words will be for ever encrusted in the history of mankind. All from the origin of time is full of Christ. He is all in all. In Him, from the beginning, all lived and moved and had their being. He is the light that illumines every man that comes into the world. He is present in the dewdrops that bejewel the flowers in the freshness of the morning. His voice is heard in the babble of the brook, and the songs of the birds, and the mighty music of the storms of ocean. He commands all the stars of heaven, and marshals them like an army in battle array. He is the Fountain of fecundity in the womb of nature, and the Source of inspiration in poetry, painting, sculpture, music, architecture, and all the arts which rejoice the heart and elevate the souls of men.

The natural law has been ever the guest of the soul of man, which refuses to be ostracised by any human power, which, in the language of the Romans, neither senate nor Roman people can silence nor destroy, which speaks in the same accent, at Athens and at Rome, and alike without distinction, to all

the peoples and generations of mankind. Both Pagan and Christian philosophies are irradiations from the one eternal sovereign reason, and the Pagan and Christian truths are rivers that flow from one source. Socrates was a forerunner of Christ, and Plato was the dawn that announced the coming day. The shadow of Christ has been flung over all the ages. He has always conversed with the children of men. He was in the manna and in the rock, in David and the Machabees. The perfume of His presence is exhaled in all time, and in various ways and measures He has been ever the cement and architect of the great society of souls. He is the only Mediator; the Saviour of all men who have been from the beginning, and will ever be, until the consummation of all time.

In vain do our moderns boast of their science. There are still many pebbles to be picked up on the shore of truth. There are many chambers in the kingdom of science. Physical science is not all. The sensible world is not all, and its path, though so carefully explored, is strewn with the ruins of its hypotheses. Is it science to tell us that when matter is indestructible the soul must die? Is it science to despise the grand organ of tradition and its legacy of the ages? Is it science to deny the eternal and indissoluble alliance that must necessarily exist between faith and the conclusions of all true science? On the contrary, is it not certain that faith and science are the daughters of truth, and cry out to all the generations of men, "*Quis nos separabit*"? No! the Church never differed from science, except when unjustly it overleaped its barriers and invaded a

territory which was not its own. And if the Church is not opposed to the advance of science, no more is she hostile to the rights of reason, for faith and reason flow from one fountain. It is in the eternal reason that all truths are true.

Faith is the telescope of reason, and God help the mariner in search of truth who embarks in the frail skiff of his unaided reason on an ocean that has been strewn with so many shipwrecks. Science, no doubt, has done great things in our day, but its empire is arrested at the portals of death. The production of a Lazarus is beyond its control. The Creator's hand alone has achieved resurrections in His name. The saints who came after, and were partakers of His power, confessed they acted by the virtue of Christ. Publicity has stamped their authority for ever. The facts of history are not disjointed nor without connection. They are links of a chain and threads of a net which must fit into each other. The Jews, Jesus Christ, and Christianity, must stand or fall together. Augustus and Napoleon are inseparable. The world which He saved on the brink of destruction is a prodigal still at the feet of Christ. "Quo Vadis?" the masterpiece of the Polish writer, reveals to us the world that Christ destroyed. The Turks in Armenia and the Germany of to-day show what culture arrives at when divorced from Christ.

The bomb and the bayonet are the forces they wield. But Christ by His teaching, supported by His example, overcame all physical forces of the world, and His apostles, the agents and ministers of His work, climbed every mountain, descended every vale, and traversed all the regions of the earth,

to disseminate in the minds and hearts of all men the knowledge and the love of their great Lord and Master, the supreme Sovereign of the thoughts and affections of men. It was certainly a grand and solemn moment when the great Creator looked out on the mighty work of His hands, and declared with His Infinite and Infallible verdict that all He had made was good. But a grander vision rose up before Him in the mightier majesty of the spiritual harvest He brought about in the resurrection of the world. All the powers of persecution only heralded His success. The oak gathered strength from the tempest. The Hercules of the forest was invigorated in the storm. "I am a Roman citizen" was succeeded by a nobler confession—"I am a Christian," and the sign that was formerly a badge of infamy became a signal of honour, and is shielded to-day, before the eyes of all men, in a manner not only marvellous but miraculous, on the glorious battlefield of France. May the influence of that sacred sign sink deeper in the minds and hearts of men, and direct in such manner the march of science that progress may be rather in the quiet paths of *peace* than in manufacturing from day to day more powerful engines of destruction.

MARY IN PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT

THE types and prophecies we behold in the histories of Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, Isaias, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Malachi are so many strokes of the brush, evolving more and more, and developing more completely, the grand and sublime figure of the Incarnate Son of God. Profane as well as sacred writings foretold the coming of the Redeemer. The Oracles of Delphi and Cuma, and the Sibyline and Druidic predictions are in harmony with the Jewish account. Abel Remusat, the profound student of the Chinese traditions, tells us how Confucius knew of the coming of the Holy One in the West, the fame of whose virtues was to stretch like the ocean from shore to shore. Plutarch, the Greek author of the well-known "Lives," unfolds to us the doctrine of Zoroaster, the Persian sacred writer, on the "Mediator." Plato speaks in his "Second Dialogue of Alcibiades" of the Great Teacher and Redeemer to come. Virgil, in his Fourth Eclogue, spoke of the Divine Child who was due at the time he wrote, and Cicero, in turn, refers to the expected Saviour. Voluspa, the sacred song of Scandinavia, recounts how the firstborn of the god Odin destroyed the great Serpent. The traditions of South American tribes relate the same event. Philosophy, theology, history, poetry, all nations and peoples, though differing in

religion, customs, manners, and language, in this matter are all agreed.

When the fullness of time was come Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced to her the fact that she was to become the miraculous Mother of God. Hence it was she was "full of grace" and "blessed among women." The first Eve was the cause of the Fall, the second of the Redemption. The Angel of Darkness was followed by the Angel of Light. As Mother of God she is inferior only to God, and deserves a homage inferior to His alone. Bossuet, in his great funeral oration of Queen Henrietta of England, called her, with justice, the "daughter, spouse, and mother of kings." But Mary's dignity was greater far as the daughter of the Heavenly Father, the Spouse of the Holy Ghost, and the Mother of the Incarnate Word. For thirty years she commanded God, and for thirty years the Omnipotent obeyed her. She made what was, humanly speaking, the rash prediction that "all generations would call her blessed." But the prophecy was realised to the full, for have not shrines and churches been erected in her honour, and have not painters and sculptors exhausted their genius in statues and paintings to leave us on the marble and the canvas an image, however imperfect, of her peerless beauty and incomparable grace? Her life, like her Son's, extends to all time. She was in types and prophecies from the beginning, and she is living still in immortal youth in the minds and hearts of 300 millions, who would die at any moment to defend her honour.

She is enshrined in the Apostles' Creed and in the inspired panegyrics of the Fathers and the Doctors

of the Church, and she shines resplendent like a shining light in the obscure caverns of the catacombs. She stands out conspicuous as the cause of the first miracle of Christ and the object of His last will. She hangs like a vision of loveliness in every Christian home, and exerts a sublimely elevating influence on all generations of mankind. Nathaniel Hawthorne, the great Protestant writer, is enthusiastic in the singing of her praises; Buchanan, though an unbeliever, thinks her worthy of all reverence; and Keble, in a poem of exquisite beauty, declares her to be "favoured beyond archangels' dreams." Who could stand then in miserable isolation and strike a discordant note in such a grand orchestra of all nations and men?

STAR OF THE SEA

ALL the saints are the grand results of the operations of the Holy Ghost. They are so many prisms, decomposing for us the inaccessible sunlight of God's infinite sanctity and beauty. They are His masterpieces, His finished portraits. If Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, prided herself so justly on her brave and gallant sons, and boasted that they were the only jewels she cared to possess, how much more reason had Mary to pride herself on being the Mother of God Himself. In her Son, the God-man, foretold from the beginning, the Eternal and Infinite Majesty found an adequate worshipper, who was human at the same time as He was divine. God owed it to Himself to make her absolutely fit for this sublime dignity.

As a man is a microcosm in the order of nature, summing up and gathering in to himself the perfections of the lower orders of existence, so is Mary a microcosm in the supernatural order of grace. She was predestined to be the golden bridge that spanned the great chasm which separates the finite from the infinite, raising thus our nature above the angels to a transcendent height that was never thought of in the wildest of the Pantheistic dreams. She came unto us as the grand, solitary specimen extant of the primitive man as he issued forth in all his stately and

unfallen beauty from the omnipotent all-creating hand of God. If God made the mere material world so passing fair, to serve as a fitting dwelling-place for man, and spread out before his enchanted vision the sublime and glorious spectacles of the rising and setting sun, the making and the dying of the world, with its picturesque and ever-moving panorama of gold and purple and sable clouds, assuming the shapes of towering battlements and magic lakes that rise and form anew like the visions of hope, defying alike the painter and the poet to describe them, how great must be the supernatural beauty of the Virgin Mother whom He chose as the great triumphal chariot, by means of which He made His mysterious entrance into the world, through the portals of humanity, trampling under its victorious wheels the baffled plans and defeated malice of the serpent! Can Shakespeare be jealous when we praise his Hamlet, Othello, or Macbeth; or Raphael, when we praise his exquisite Madonnas; or Beethoven, when we listen in transport to his splendid sonatas; or Elgar, when we are ravished by the music of his magnificent symphony? No, "pile Pelion on Ossa" in your praise of the Blessed Queen of angels and of men, and you will still be mountains beneath her merits and the wishes and example of her Divine Son. We cannot have God for our Father if we refuse to have Mary for our Mother. Without her there is no redemption. What God has so closely joined together, let no one dare to separate. History tells us of nations and individuals who have been deeply indebted to her for her powerful intercession.

Time was when Oxford and Cambridge and our

great seats of learning were proud to honour her and pay her homage, and instead of unseemly satyrs and pagan hamadryads, graced with her beautiful image each stately grove and solitary park; when her beautiful figure adorned the prows of our myriad ships of commerce and of war; when the summits of our cliffs and mountains were crowned by her image, that smiled like an emblem of hope on the eyes of the sea-tossed mariner, whose faith was unbounded in the "Star of the Sea." Her elevating and benign influence has been spread like a beautiful moonlight over the fair fields of our literature. Longfellow, Tennyson, Goethe, Schiller, Wordsworth, Rossetti, and Francis Thompson (the last great luminary that shone in the heavens of our poetry), all vie with each other in singing sweet songs in her praise. When, sailing up the noble waters of the St. Lawrence, the traveller nears the fair city of Montreal, the rapids are so dangerous that the helm of the vessel is handed over to a special pilot, to steer her over in safety. Let us look on Mary as our heaven-sent pilot, to guide us securely through the rocks and quicksands of life to the harbour of our heavenly country.

FAITH'S KEEN EYE

THE work of the Fisherman is the mightiest achievement recorded in history. The net launched by Simon has been filled to the brim, and the small mustard seed that was cast into the earth has developed to a tree of colossal proportions, and multitudes innumerable have flocked to its shelter to find beneath its shadow tranquillity and peace. The venerable spell of the Church's antiquity, the charm of her sacraments and sacrificial rites, the glorious deeds that make up her history, the magnificent pomp of her symbolic ceremonial, the inspired productions of her learned doctors, the transcendent eloquence handed down in her pulpits, the epics in stone we admire in her temples, the grandeur of her saints and the heroism of her martyrs, form an infinite perspective of all-conquering force, which must potently appeal to all elevated thought and all noble sentiment in the intellect and heart of man. The aim of her ministrations is to counteract the consequences of the Fall and convert, by the magic of her spiritual agencies, the greatest of catastrophes in the history of the world into the grandest triumph of God's infinite love. Pride is the paramount cause of all evil; she pursues it therefore with relentless vigour, for pride it was that fabricated Babel and sank in the end great Babylon in the dust. In envy and avarice she sees

pestilential winds, bearing death and destruction on their poisonous wings, that dry up and wither all the joys of existence, and choke up the instruments predestined by God to contribute to the benefit and happiness of mankind. Faith, the foundation of her supernatural life, is planted deep down in the essence of our nature. Faith armed Alexander for the conquest of the Old World and spurred on Columbus to the discovery of the New. Faith braced up the tender and delicate virgins to despise all the threats and the tortures of tyrants, and brave without flinching the fire and the sword. For the Holy City flung open its gates and unfolded the vision of beauty to their gaze. Hope, kind nurse of the persecuted, and sweet comfortress of the afflicted, stood radiant with heavenly smiles by their side, singing songs in their ears of celestial harmony. The pains endured with such patience by the martyrs are proofs undeniable of God's presence and power. Her doctrines encompass all persons and all times; the doctrines of error are limited to both. Pythagoras spoke to the Greeks alone, but Christ spoke to all humanity. The altars of the gods have passed long since away, but the altars of the Church of God are immortal. All science and knowledge is her proud inheritance. From the crumbling chaos of tottering Rome she snatched all the precious literature of antiquity, and the monasteries of her monks were the harbours of refuge that protected most jealously all the remnants of knowledge that escaped from the shipwreck of the barbarian hordes. Roger Bacon, Copernicus, and Kepler in turn, brought the heavens and earth much nearer to our ken. The fossils discovered in the strata of

the earth corroborated the scriptural story of the Deluge, and the unity of all knowledge, both in nature and religion, became clearer every day with each stage of progress. The movement and repose co-existing in the universe, the march of the seasons and revolutions of the stars, successive in one sense and stable in another, presented an image of that absolute and progressive nature which constitutes the essence of the Eternal Being. The old sun that sinks every evening in the west is the same that arises in the morning dawn. In its rising, its zenith, and its setting at eve, while relatively at rest, though changing to us, it conveys in the symbol of its triple illumination a magnificent image of the Trinity of God. The keen eye of faith sees the hand of the Creator ever moving and active behind the veil. All creatures are evidences of God's providence and power, the smallest and the greatest are rivals in His praise. Twenty thousand pounds of air weigh on every individual, and far from oppressing, safeguard our existence. Water mounts in an element much lighter than itself and descends in fresh showers of rain and of dew. The king-songster of night is an emblem of our faith, for when shorn of his sight he sings sweetest of all. So Homer and Milton, when blinded to earth, sang the sweetest songs of the things that are eternal. Time turns to dust the stones of the Pyramids; God's works, like His words, will never pass away.

TELESCOPE OF REASON

THE Catholic Church is the mother of truth. She deposited it as a germ in the heart of the world, to bring forth abundant and beautiful fruit in the souls of men, from generation to generation till the end. In the gold and diamond fields of Scripture, in the magnificent productions of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, in the erudite and elaborate works of her theologians, there are treasures of light and unfathomable depths, which are a joy for ever to those who seek for all that is most elevated in the pursuits of men. Truth is like God in its unity and variety, and though ever in substance it is one and the same, it offers at the same time to the spiritual mind inexhaustible horizons of expansion and progress. Every word of God is a precious stone that the human intelligence by reverent contemplation can polish more and more and penetrate more deeply, till the brilliance and beauty of its supernatural charm surpasses all the witcheries of science and of art, and imparts to us a glimpse, though faint and obscure, of the vision which constitutes the paradise of the Blessed. St. Vincent of Lerins, in words that cannot die, has expressed this beautiful feature of our Faith.

Each doctrinal formula in the Church's Councils is a summary of explorations made by saints and sages

in the infinite regions of dogmatic science. Theology unfolds and makes clear and explicit what implicitly is contained in the Faith of our Fathers.

The Bull "Ineffabilis" saw the Immaculate Conception in monuments of the Eastern and Western Churches. Truth, like the Man-God, is human and divine, immutable and capable of indefinite progress. How marvellous is the union of the Catholic religion, how unique a phenomenon in a universe of change! What multitudes of men, divided in all else, pre-eminent in every department of knowledge, speaking different tongues, having different views in philosophy, in science, in history and the arts, who for nineteen centuries have converged and blended in the wonderful union of the Catholic Faith. Yet each dogma in its days was a field of battle. A branch here and there falls off from the tree, and, like Arius and Luther, marks its path with ruin. But these notes of discordance are lost in the harmony of the chorus that swells up from millions of men, in echo to the words that were uttered by Peter: "To whom shall we go, O Lord my God, for Thou hast the words of eternal life?" Men's words have the fate of the autumn leaves, but the words of God live on for ever. What mysterious things they teach unto men! The unity in trinity of the Maker of the world, the strange propagation of Adam's sin, the marvellous union of two natures in Christ, the presence of omnipotence in the sacramental veils! Yet three hundred millions of men bow their heads in the dust and in one grand unanimous concert exclaim: "I believe in God the Father, who is in Heaven; in Jesus Christ, His eternal Son; in the Catholic Church, His immaculate Spouse, whom He

loves and cherishes, and which, like Himself, will endure for ever."

The doctrine of the Church is both light and shade, like the cloud that accompanied the Israelites in the desert. Yet, though partly dark, it is true to say that belief is easier than unbelief. Seneca said philosophers were a credulous people. Superstition replaces the rejection of religion, and mystery seems essential to the nature of man. Our soul, says Tertullian, is naturally Christian. Catholicity only can prove its existence, and philosophy itself is indebted to faith for its birth, its progress, and its final perfection. Faith may be called the telescope of reason, discovering new stars in the firmament of truth. Faith is a powerful lever of the mind, and acts as its friendly and potent ally. The giants of science were men of faith. We are great to-day by standing on their shoulders. Like Moses, they showed us the Promised Land.

THE CREATIVE HAND

LET us take the wings of the eagle, and with Moses and the angel of the Apocalypse mount up in spirit to the summits of our history, when the infinite ocean of the goodness of God overflowed its banks and the Omnipotent flung out His creative word on the great abyss when sun and moon, and stars, and earth, and sea, and animals, plants, and birds, and, last of all, His masterpiece man, sprang forth from nothing. His presence was felt in the silence of the woods and the majesty of the mountains and the solemn peace of the quiet ocean. The floor of the earth was enamelled with flowers. Each creature was a verse of the great poem of God, and all nature a canvas, on which He painted His beauty. The heavens were bespangled with the jewels of the stars, and outshone in their beauty all the ornaments of kings. He deposited, so to speak, the aroma of His attributes in the vase of Creation, and each creature in its measure is an expression of God, a voice in the chorus, and an instrument in the grand orchestra, that proclaim in their music and harmony the power and beauty of their Maker. Men like Kepler and Cuvier fell in ecstasy before the footsteps of God, and snatched from the contemplation of nature rich treasures of inspiration that are hidden from the ordinary eye. The genius of the poet and the purity

of the saint saw in Nature a book, a literature all divine, in which every syllable and every letter was a distinct reflection of an eternal ideal in the infinite mind of God. But as time rolled on, the footsteps of God were taken for Himself and the echoes for His voice. Both nature and man were confounded with God. The Rome of Augustus was indeed the heir of all the ages, and all the civilisations of antiquity had poured into her bosom their accumulated treasures of intelligence and culture. The immense majesty of the Roman peace brooded like a mighty dove over the vast extent of the Roman Empire. But prosperity is a force that tends to dissolution. Rome, the great victress of the world, was riding to her fall. The pomp and show of her external glory was a mask that covered the desolation within. While Prometheus foreshadowed the mystery of the expiation, he revealed at the same time the contemptible envy as he did other unworthy passions in the life and character of the gods they worshipped. Only masters and slaves, patricians and plebeians, were the classes that constituted the society of the day.

Whole centuries of servitude had strangled in their souls the very thought or desire for liberty. *Panem et Circenses.* Luxury and pleasure summed up their aspirations. "Give me liberty or give me death"—the cry of every noble people—was for them an unknown tongue. They accepted slavery, if only it was accompanied by vice. In a word, they had lost their soul. Historians tell us, as a portrait of these times, that Herod ordered crowds to be massacred, that their expiring cries might drown the shouts of

triumph and exultation that he naturally expected would hail his death, and Archelaus had no less than three thousand of the Jewish people put to death to celebrate the occasion of his advent to the throne. And all these infamies were not practised only, they were taught also in the schools. In the East, there was Pantheism and Metempsychosis, which terminated in Deification; in the West, great Plato taught that matter was uncreated, and dualism and fatalism controlled the actions of men. The multiplication of schools and profusion of systems had begotten an intellectual scepticism, which produced in its turn a practical Epicureanism in the life of the day. The wholesale upheaval of this intellectual and moral world, and the creation of a new one in its stead, was the grand and colossal work attempted and achieved by Christianity.

BLOTTING OUT GOD

THE history of religions is but the history of the wanderings of man in pursuit of the lost truth of the primitive revelation. The true notion of God degenerated with time. Even outside the Jewish nation monotheism survived the almost universal wreck of truth. The pure crystal was obscured by the alloy of chaotic confusion and incoherence inevitably found outside of the doctrine taught us by Divine revelation.

Sublime intellects like Aristotle, Plato, and Tully, by their natural vigour, approached very close to the teachings of Christianity, and those two indomitable champions of the faith, Augustine and Aquinas, used with advantage their philosophic systems to pulverise the false philosophies of their day. Kant, the greatest of all German philosophers, said the heaven above his head and the moral law in his heart were irresistible proofs of the existence of God. It were well if Fichte, Hegel, and Schelling, his disciples, had remembered this when indulging in their Pantheistic reveries.

Spinoza, Vacherof, Renan, Spencer, Darwin and Huxley, Comte and Littré, all proved in their turn how even great minds lost all their lustre when they tried the fruitless task of blotting out God from His creation. Napoleon only looked at the stars and

recognised their Maker. Leibnitz, Malebranche, Descartes, Pasteur, Newton, and nearly all the intellectual giants of all the ages confessed God.

History proclaimed through all its pages that licence of living begot licence of thought, and return to good living brought back to the truth. It was evil living that brought on the deluge, and that caused, as well, the retrogressive evolution in religion. It was the impious that in his depraved heart said there was no God. The mansion spoke of the architect, the painting of the artist, the statue of the sculptor; and, in turn, did not earth, sea, sky cry out in sublime concert, *ipse fecit nos, et non ipsi nos*, "God has made us, and not we ourselves." All the chemicals in our laboratories could not make a fly, and our Godless scientists would have us believe the universe, the world, and the stars, all animal life, and the soul of man were made by an atom, a germ, a cloud, or the dreamy abstraction of an axiom. Nothing was too absurd for these supermen to put in the place of God.

All nature, in spite of its majesty and beauty, inspired our pity as well as the homage of our adoration. The great stars themselves could not change their courses, and man himself, the king of creation, must submit to the sovereignty of death. A fever or a toothache must cure the Pantheist of the fond illusion that he was God.

Common sense had saved the world from ever beholding a whole atheist race. No legislator, no age, no language ever banished His Sacred Name. God could not be shelved. All false gods had been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Matter was man's slave. Spinoza's substance was shadow.

"All flesh is grass," and neither the Goddess of Reason nor the tyranny of a Kaiser could oust God from His throne. He alone could explain Himself and the universe that He had made.

The poisonous plant of atheism was rooted in a corrupt soil. It sprang more from the heart than from the mind. It affirmed all and proved nothing. It provoked ridicule by the absurdity and audacity of its gratuitous assertions. But it braved all in its silly efforts to put out the sun. It was no argument against God that He was incomprehensible, for He was immense as the sea. We knew Him enough to adore Him and love Him.

He made all and preserved all and embraced all in the arms of His Divine Providence. The mighty worlds He had scattered like silver dust in the infinite realms of space were the play-toys of His power. It was impossible to pluck Him out from the minds and hearts of men. He was in all minds, all peoples, and all tongues, and all His works sang perpetual anthems in His praise. Should blind chance or necessity, or the wild dance of everlasting atoms, or any other of the empty substitutes that atheists had concocted take the place for a moment of the Eternal and Omnipotent Creator, who from the beginning held captive all the minds and hearts of men?

It was a wise and true saying of Pascal that "faith has enough of light for them who wish to believe, and enough of darkness for those who don't." In this life the sun was behind a cloud. Faith was a condition for our future vision. Voltaire, in one of

his lucid moments, said it was only a madman who pretended a watch did not prove the existence of a watchmaker, and still more that the universe did not prove the existence of God. All the billions of centuries that atheists had imagined to support their quasi-scientific romances and fantastic fairy-tales would never make us believe that realities could come from abstractions, or life from death. We would still believe with Leibnitz that "God is the first reason of things," and that a mud-heap will never replace the eternal spirit—the God of infinite goodness who makes His sun to shine and His gentle rain to fall on all alike—the God who forgave Magdalen and the prodigal child and the repentant thief on Calvary —the God whose Name was a comfort to the sick, a consolation and a hope to the dying, whose footsteps could be traced clearly in all the many pathways of creation—the God of incorruptible justice, whose mercies are above all His works, and whose infinite love had created for man, if he would only fight faithfully to the end, a Kingdom more beautiful than all the empires of earth.

The ear of humanity, tired out and jaded with the Babel of multitudinous discordant voices, was crying aloud in distress to hear again the voice of Jesus which it had ceased to listen to so long. Three hundred millions of the human race were speaking with a harmony not heard elsewhere, and formed the grandest concert in the memory of man.

They were the true brotherhood in which unity dwelt, and dissension and discord were unknown. Their faith was the grandest possession they craved, for their faith was in God, and God was greater than

man, than his genius, his science, and his power. In testimony to the truth of that faith, nineteen centuries of Christianity spoke with no divided voice, no uncertain sound, and millions had gone cheerfully to death.

FALLEN DESPOTISMS

THE life of Christ is reflected in His Church, and Calvary and Thabor have left their footprints in history. No sooner were the hordes of the barbarians overcome than the prophet of Arabia arose upon the horizon. With the scimitar in one hand and the Koran in the other, he indulged in the dream of universal empire. The rulers of Asia Minor and Africa and Spain surrendered in turn to his powerful domination. But in time the Crescent was shattered at Lepanto, the Cross was raised in triumph on the ruins of its power. Charles Martel and Pepin were followed by Charlemagne, who defeated the Saracens, the Saxons, and the Lombards, and swore on the steps of St. Peter's to protect and defend, with the might of his arm, the Church he had so richly and providentially endowed. When Charlemagne died his empire died with him, but his gifts to the Papacy remained as the relics of a world that had passed away. A new world sprang to life, wherein Gregory and Barbarossa waged the never-ending battle between might and right. Frederick, though crowned by four anti-Popes, had to fly from the Capitol disguised as a valet, while Alexander III. took his seat in Rome on the throne of St. Peter. Soon another Frederick swore the ruin of the Church. He besieged three Popes in the Castle of the Angel, but when

Innocent VI. excommunicated the tyrant his sceptre soon fell from his grasp and an empire of two centuries existed no longer. Full seventy years were the Popes at Avignon and the schism of the West wrapped the Papacy in darkness. Even saints were divided as to who was the Pope. But the sky was soon cleared, and Martin V. was acknowledged as the successor of St. Peter. The so-called Reformation now hove in sight, and the half of Europe was deluged with blood and poisoned with the venom of pernicious doctrines. Men of genius like Luther, Erasmus, and Rabelais poured torrents of eloquence, erudition and raillery on the time-hallowed teachings and traditions of the Church. The heavens were black with impending storm. But the Captains of Christ were ready for the fray. Ignatius and Xavier and their valiant army rushed gallantly to the rescue, and in India and Africa, in the Old World and the New, gained hosts of adherents to the Gospel of Christ.

The Council of Trent was the real Reformer, and the Church, like gold, was only purified in the fire. But the rest she enjoyed was of short duration. She who merited to be called the Eldest Daughter of the Church and whose soil was so fertile in illustrious saints was destined to give birth to a genius of evil, whose poisoned shafts of ridicule and hate were more dangerous to her life than the banded efforts of a hundred armies. He drew kings in the wake of his pestilential progress and united all the errors often refuted in the past in a vast and formidable conspiracy of falsehood. All religion was derided as a vile superstition, and Pope Pius VI. passed from

prison to prison till his death, which was hailed as the end of the Papacy. King Louis was sacrificed to the fury of the mob, and nobles and priests went in crowds to the scaffold. But Pius VII. mounts the Papal throne, the hero of Corsica runs to fall at his feet, and receives at his hands the consecration of his crown. When the victor of Marengo, intoxicated by glory, laid violent hands on the person of the Pontiff, he found in St. Helena the tragical sepulchre where all his ambitions were buried for ever and the rock on which all his high hopes were dashed to pieces.

Such experience in the past should be brimful of instruction. But our modern philosophers slight the lessons of history, which for them is a book that is closed and a fountain that is sealed. So they dream still dreams of imaginary perfectibility, and build palaces of air where themselves will be gods, and all pleasure and progress will answer to their call. How often in the past have these prophets of evil announced in their folly that the Pope was no more! But scarcely had the words expired on their lips when death summoned them forth and Peter was still there. We are standing on the threshold of a new creation. The power of the people is the power of the future. The sceptre of despots will fall from their hands, the many will possess the inheritance of God and all will partake of the joys of God's world. The lesson we have learned from the monster of Berlin will never be forgotten by the children of men, but will send its echoes to the ages afar. The Republic of the West has hearkened to her call, and the great Russian nation has shaken off her chains. Resurrec-

tions are in the air. The days of the Neros are fast fading away, universal brotherhood is verging on achievement, and the spirit of the Gospel is spreading among men. Egotism will be branded as a crime against humanity, and the selfish regarded as the enemies of our race.

Let us hope, when the final settlement will be made, that the nations will put in practice the ideals they profess, the protection of the weak from the oppression of the strong. May no jarring note break the universal harmony, so that, like unto Christ who rose glorious from the dead, the great world of the future will rise glorious from the grave of its errors and shortcomings in the past, and all may proclaim, to the ends of the earth, that verily the Christ has risen once again.

THE GREATNESS OF THE LOWLY

HUMILITY is the first in the harvest of virtues that have flourished in such variegated beauty in the rich and fertile garden of Christianity. *Exinanivit semetipsum* ("He hath emptied Himself") is the ever-recurring theme in the grand and tragic epic that opened in the wind-swept stable of Bethlehem and closed in the tempestuous cloud of Golgotha.

It is the nature of man to aspire to the heights of power and domination. The artist who fashions his forms of grace and loveliness to be a joy to mankind for ever, the commander whose magic voice and presence leads enthusiastic hosts to victory, the orator who wields by the potent spell of his eloquence an irresistible fascination over the souls of his fellowmen, all seek alike, whether born in the palace or the cot, to build, though on ruins of all else but themselves, the ephemeral temple of their supremacy. "Ascendam" was the cry that resounded on men's lips through all creation, till the advent of the great abasement, whatever the enemies that disputed their path or endeavoured to arrest their progress. The powerful aristocracies of wealth and station, and the creatures of capricious circumstance, whether products of a day or the more permanent results of successive generations, could exert no power to beat back the swelling wave of ambition, or contend with

the fierce currents of pride. If only worth and merit had attended men's efforts at elevation! But the canker of baseness lay often at the root of their aspirations to ascendancy, and insults were willingly accepted, and honour and principle were sacrificed, to arrive at the consummation of their desires and attain the wished-for goal. Alas! what sordid souls can hide beneath a seemly show! What sad and startling revelations are made, in the pages of history, behind the mask of worldly greatness!

No glamour of stately robe, nor pompous parade of courtly ceremonial, can cloak the ugliness of deformity that was often to be found in the mansions of the great. All this Christianity was predestined to destroy. Superhuman was the task it attempted, and superhuman the success it achieved. The Babel cry "Ascendam" was supplanted by another, "Descendamus." Let us sink to the sense of our native nothingness and rise to the height of our immortal destiny. A new name was fashioned of mighty omen, which was hitherto unheard in the dialects of men. Humility, like Calvary, became a name to conjure with, and was destined to shine in letters of gold on the standards of the new race of men, that extinguished in their higher glory the Pagan splendours of Rome. The distinction of mere earthly birth disappeared in the presence of Him who had no beginning, and whose great humiliation was to obscure, in a way, by His generation in time, the sublime grandeur of His eternity. The Omnipotent of Bethlehem robbed riches of its spell. The highest became the lowest, in the City of God. The Divine abasement was the tocsin of all pride. Kings flung

their crowns and sceptres in the dust, and, like Christ in Nazareth, sought solitude and obscurity in the cloister. They renounced their own life to put on that of God. The empire of sanctity was alone held in honour, and St. Dominic and St. Vincent constituted the new nobility of Christianity. The saints became the heroes of humanity. Emptied of nature, they were filled with Divine grace. Poor before men, they were rich before God. Despising time, they captured eternity. Lambs before right and justice, they were lions in the face of wrong, and resisted unto death the wicked rulers who abused their authority and prostituted to their passions the power that was lent them from God.

Oh, rulers of men! reflect and understand the greatness of your mission, and the tremendous responsibility that attends your exalted station. The fate of the bodies and souls of men depends on the administration of that authority which you have received as a sacred and terrible trust from the hands of God. Study the secret of good government, serve that you may rule, according to the designs of God. Charity is the great magnet of souls. Oh, God of the lowly! establish in the pendent reconstruction of the world the new kingdom of the meek, that the ruled and the rulers may live together in the practice of that humility which is the mother of true peace and love, so that nations, as well as individuals, may abide in harmony, accomplish all noble Christian ideals, put an end for ever to the horrors of war, and march side by side in the bonds of amity, along the pleasant paths of prosperity and progress.

GRACE AND GIFTS

CORRESPONDENCE to grace is the secret of all sanctity. It is life eternal in its germ and substance. Grace is indispensable to all spiritual accomplishment, and, with human co-operation, it performs all deeds. All duties are summed up in yielding to its action. It is principal author of all virtues in men, and obedience to its voice is the life of the saints. Grace has its chosen time and season. The sovereign independence of the conduct of Providence controlled the moment of the coming of the Redeemer. The peoples of the earth for 4,000 years cried out from the darkness for the grand Emancipation. When His times was come, Christ ascended into Heaven, though the primitive Church, in the freshness of its youth, lamented the loss of His fascinating presence; though to Peter and John the earth grew dark for the sunlit smile they beheld no longer, and the stillness of that voice that cheered them no more. The tears of the Magdalen, whose sins were all burned up in the ardent fires of her repentant love, had no force to hold back the predestined hour. But the luminous cloud that lifted Him to Heaven was prophetic of the glory of the Paraclete to come.

The sacrifice of the Apostles brought in time its reward. For individual, as for general and universal graces, there are years and days and hours of salva-

tion. We know not the day and we know not the hour; all is hid from our eyes in the everlasting councils. The breathings of the spirit are a golden chain, whose final link is a soul's ascension—the seed of a tree that produces others and ends in the majestic proportions of the forest. Good deeds never die, but expand for ever. Magnificence is stamped on the operations of God's love, and His goodness presides over all His works. *Felix culpa* has no solitary existence. By the sinner's repentance God triumphs over ruins. Despair is the unpardonable insult to the Saviour. Yet the judgments of God are fathomless deeps which sink down infinitely beyond our ken. The supernatural world is all wrapped in mystery. We walk all its streets with trembling and fear. There is danger in despising the smallest of its gifts. The tiniest drop of the dew of Heaven may end in the river of eternal joy. Each actual grace is the passage of an angel, not in tumult like the tempest, but in mild and gentle voice. The din of the world can drown its accents. To the Magi God's grace appeared as a star. Delay was dangerous. They followed the light. Not grace alone, nor will alone, but both united were needed to achieve the destined purposes of God. Sacrifice was required to follow the star, but sacrifice is inevitably followed by ascension. Calvary and Olivet are ever inseparable. Heaven is the harvest of our tears. As in battlefields on earth, endurance is the path, not work alone, which leads to victory. The crown is the recompense of those that persevere. The Magi travelled in the depths of winter. They left all the pomp and luxury of the court. The uncertainty of

the voyage, and the strangeness of its aims, were no barriers to stop or impede them in their course. No human consideration could bar their progress. The star was the splendour of the Word of God. The presents of the Magi are mines of instruction, but charity was the keynote that inspired them all. Charity is noble, charity is royal, charity is the virtue of the King of Kings. It is charity that gives us the wings of the dove, and that lifts up the soul from steep to steep, till it lights on the summit of the Holy Hills. The Magi in time returned to their country, where the crown of martyrdom, by a final consecration, brought their glorious fortunes to a fitting close.

How long has the star been shining over us and shown us the place where Our Saviour lies! In the Bethlehem of the Church, the true House of Bread, we have eaten of the manna of eternal life. What the Magi gazed on and adored with love is the flesh of our flesh and the soul of our souls, and in Holy Communion is the pledge of immortality. Let us cultivate this marvellous union in time, which paves the way to the union of eternity.

THE COLOSSAL CONQUEST

RESEMBLANCE to Himself was the primitive plan on which God constructed the king of creation. The religions of nature that sprang up in the East, with perverted incarnations and pantheistic dreams, corrupted and reversed the original design. Yet the Jupiter of the Pantheon was a noble form on which Phidias stamped the souvenir of a god. Plato, the acme of mere human inspiration, with an eagle flight touched the Christian summits with his lofty ideal of God-reflecting man. Cicero, the prince of the orators of Rome, and the eloquent mouthpiece of the old world's best teachings, beheld in conscience the supreme tribunal at whose bar all human cases must appear. Marcus Aurelius, in his tributes to the gods and his solemn thanksgiving for all their favours, prepared us for the writings of the Doctors of the Church on the goodness underlying all the paths of Providence. Thus "coming events cast their shadows before," and the dawn ushered in the noonday sun.

But nature was impotent to control human conduct, and the heart refused allegiance to the dictates of the mind. This discord in ancient and all human nature sent a cry to Heaven to restore the lost harmony. Christ obeyed the summons and came from on high to teach perfection and effect it by His grace. "Be perfect," said He, "as My Father is

perfect. My grace will be always sufficient for thee." Let the life of Christ be henceforward thine; to be "Alter Christus" be thy highest aim. The grand Himalaya of human endeavour was the reproduction of Christ in the human soul.

The saints were the stars in the spiritual sky, which variously reflected the Eternal Sun. Though limited and imperfect, each showed in his life a special particular aspect of God's infinite nature, of those splendours that were visible behind the veil, those shrouded beginnings of the glory to come, rough sketches, though substantial, of the final transfiguration in the home where we all should be like unto God. The queen of night, with its borrowed brilliance, had a glory characteristic and proper of its own. God alone was completely and entirely holy. "Tu solus sanctus" was the song of the Church. The sanctity of the saints was the flower of their faith, the Sermon on the Mount was their fertilising seed. The life of Christ from Bethlehem to Golgotha was a source of sanctity which would never run dry. Socrates died like a king of men and sank like the sun in royal repose, but Christ, who shared all our human infirmities, yet suffered and died with the majesty of God.

Offence against light so dazzling and divine was the sin, perhaps, which would never be forgiven. It recoiled in lightning on the bold blasphemer. Scripture was the infinite well of the saints; beside it all human eloquence was dim; all earthly creations of the poet and the artist must yield to the greater omnipotent creation of all that in Scripture was beautiful and true. The breathings of the Spirit made all

music dull. His voice was sweet as of distant waters. He spoke as man never spoke before. The nature of Christ was all brimful of kindness. He was known as the justest and the gentlest of men. He passed like a sunbeam through the streets of Jerusalem, illumining dark places in bruised human hearts. "Sursum corda" was His magic theme and the secret spell of His moral sway. The fiat of creation resumed its power in the miracles He wrought upon stubborn wills. Humanity in His day had sunk to its lowest; all obstacles rose to obstruct His progress. Sophists and Epicureans were blocking the way. In Judea, Samaritans and Jews were in conflict. The Pharisees were notorious for their pretensions and pride, and were known among men for their hardness of heart. The law was perpetually resounding on their lips, while arbitrary and capricious was the exercise of their power. They used base intrigue and the vilest diplomacy; they were hypocrites, in short, and, in Christ's own words, "a race of vipers and whited sepulchres," who imposed without scruple on the shoulders of others the burden they themselves were unwilling to bear. Their "pontifical power of self-absolution" was equalled by their partial and unprincipled rule. Christ stood in their midst in sublime isolation, dislocated entirely from all history of the past. His conquest was colossal. He might justly be called the best, the greatest, and the most original of men.

CHILDREN OF PROMISE

How vast is the difference between our daily lives and those of the saints who realised their condition! How yawning is the abyss between practice and profession, though practice is all, and profession is nothing in the eyes of Him who sees us as we are! How many seek the flatteries and favours of the world as if they were signs of our justification! For how many are the Beatitudes practical truths! How many regard suffering as a badge of predestination, and, since God died to save us, all pain a consecration and persecution a blessing! Presentiments of what God has prepared for us in His kingdom are frequently granted along the thorny road to those who have sacrificed the most for His love. In adversity the Church works its greatest wonders. Mere worldly prosperity is a barren soil for producing the everlasting harvest of the spirit. Let us try to penetrate beneath the surface of the Scripture; every word is a jewel of infinite worth. All genius at best is the word of man; all Scripture, on the contrary, is the Word of God. The assumed love of God is a snare and illusion in the hard, selfish hearts who give not to the poor.

The Pharisees gave alms, but with observation, not for the sake of example but to glorify themselves. Not mere admiration and praise of Christ, but His

imitation is the one thing necessary. They who worship Christ, not in word but in deed, are those alone who inherit the promise. They who love the world can be bought by the world, and the wages it offers are the wages of death. The present world is a fallen world. It was beautiful coming from the hand of God, but sin has blurred the comeliness of its face, though grace effected its grand restoration. Happy fault! *felix culpa!* is the song of the Church. Be not, said St. Paul, conformed to this world. Our lasting dwelling place is not here below. Our Thabor is to be with the risen Christ, our home in the blessed company of the saints. He who was rich, and for us became poor, has set us an example that may not be made void. He had not, while here, where to lay His Head, and those who were with Him had to minister to His wants. In the original ideal disposition of Christianity priests, bishops, and poor had all things in common. St. Paul tells us food and raiment are enough, for empty we were born and empty we must die. Our pretended necessities are imaginary needs, the requirements of station, the fabrications of our pride. Humility and charity have a marvellous power to shrink our own wants and extend those of others. All pompous parade is no symbol of merit, and the empty trappings of earthly display are but weak guarantees of intrinsic worth. All genuine excellence of the daughter of the King derives exclusively from the beauty within. It was written by an author of ancient Rome: "*Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*," describing an able and worthy citizen who invariably shed lustre on the offices he held. For some men adorn the position they hold,

and others their position alone adorns. Who was greater than God and who poorer than He? Was not Infinite Wisdom in a stable born? Riches and rank are cunning seducers, and few are callous to the power of their wiles. The Sermon on the Mount, and Nazareth and Calvary, are entirely unknown in the Governments of our day. Self-worship and the luxuries of inglorious ease are not means to arrive at the Land of Promise. All employments, professions, and occupations are of value in the measure that we follow in the footsteps of the Master, and unfaithful and unprofitable servants are they who bury the talents, whether great or small, that God has entrusted to their culture and care. Universal sympathy is a character of Christ: a narrow-minded egotism is no product of the Gospel. To resume all the life of our Leader and Guide, He went about always doing good to all. He alone is our Way, our Truth, and our Life; he who follows Him walks not in darkness or doubt, but in roads that are safe for Eternal Life.

THE TWO EMPIRES

THE world-wide dissemination of the Word referred to by the Apostle has taken on wings in our days of progress, when not steam and electrical forces only, but the waves of the circumambient air, bear on willing shoulders the burden of our messages, and with speed as swift as the flight of our thoughts convey them to the uttermost regions of our planet. Thus all, by strong though sweet compulsion, must serve the purposes of the Creator of the world. The road at times is rough and rude and red with seas of human blood that leads, we hope, to the consummation of all wishes, the brotherhood and happiness, without distinction, of all the many peoples of the earth. The mutual industrial dependence of the nations, like Rome's imperial sway of old, is the path predestined by an all-seeing Providence to draw men together in union and charity and spread on every side the grand kingdom of His love. The palms of victory have been carried off incessantly by the glorious procession of His missionary martyrs. The great social movements on every soil are converging alike toward the union of men. But a union that hopes to be solid and stable, which embraces at once all minds and all hearts, can be built up alone on the principles of Christ, embodied in that Church which Scripture tells us is the pillar and ground of unchang-

ing truth, which proclaims, in a voice that never falters, that men are all bound to love one another as the children of Him who was sacrificed for all. She alone can claim to be one in doctrine with a unity of person, of time, and of place, thus exclusively realising the prayer of Christ that all should be one, as the Trinity is One. To preserve this unity she contended with emperors and closed with enemies in deadly strife. For this she faced all the fury of persecution. Her mission is spiritual, her empire over souls: to teach, to sanctify, and to govern mankind. The Church and State have their separate orbits and can move without clash in their respective spheres. Both Moses and Aaron had their power from God. The source is the same, for all power comes from Him. But the field of its exercise is distinct and diverse. No chaos exists in the ordinances of Heaven. Azarias the high priest resisted King Ozias and ejected him boldly from the sanctuary of the Temple. The kings of earth may command the bodies, but their domination stops at the portals of the soul. The glory of Constantine was to shield the Church, not vainly to usurp the control of the helm. Ozius of Cordova reminded Constantius that, though Emperor of earth, the things of Heaven were beyond his grasp. The struggles of investitures in the ages of faith, and the lives of Pontiffs like Gregory VII., show what storms the Church does not hesitate to encounter, and the wonderful sacrifices she is ready to make, in defence of the sacred and inviolable principle of the spiritual freedom and independence of the Church. The despotic rulers of Pagan Rome swallowed up and absorbed all power

in the State. The Emperor of earth would be Emperor of Heaven. The rights of religion and the individual were sacrificed without scruple to the Moloch of the State. In the spiritual kingdom of Christ, on the contrary, all the citizens are equal as children of Christ. Hence the freedom of the Church, when properly understood, is the freedom as well of the whole human race. It is likewise the strongest support of the State. We can bow to a man who degrades the sceptre, when we know his authority comes exclusively from God. The Church receives power directly from Him. Kings, presidents, and parliaments, emperors and czars, receive it from God through the hands of the people. All earthly rulers are their public servants. The tyrant who makes arbitrary use of his power, who forgets that he is only for the people's good, has betrayed the trust that was placed in his hands, and forfeits by the fact all claim on allegiance. Caprice, however, may exist in peoples as well as abuse in the government of kings, and changes should be slowly and cautiously contemplated lest the remedy which is sought should prove worse than the disease. St. Thomas, Suarez, and Bellarmine are guides that conduct us securely on these dangerous paths. "In medio," says the ancient, "tutissimus ibis."

A SECOND CREATION

THE Church by her charity founded modern civilisation, and is now as ever the mother of true progress. In Prussia and Poland, in England and Spain, whole cities were indebted to the Church for their existence. The Pontiffs—or bridge-makers, as the name signifies —protected all travellers from the brigands of the forest. The monasteries were castles and asylums of refuge ever ready to shield and to give them a welcome. No viler calumny was ever manufactured than the Protestant tradition of the "lazy monks." Their houses were monuments of architectural skill; they were adepts themselves in mechanical arts and masters in painting and sculpture as well. The Church also started the expedition of the Crusades, which secured for the nations the freedom of the seas. The Church was the author of our wisest laws. She prohibited the accused to be condemned in their absence, and mere accusation from the highest places to be ranked as equivalent to a condemnation. When Rome had fallen, the ministers of Christianity poured oil on the waters in tempestuous times, and checked with an even and impartial hand the pride of the prince and the haughty baron and the reckless anarchy of insurgent bands. She opposed strong barriers to the savage Turk, and ostracised slavery from the Christian State.

A supreme tribunal, as in other days, presiding with power over chaos and confusion, acknowledged by the nations now rushing to destruction, would prove without doubt a masterpiece of policy, arrest a disaster both colossal and irremediable, and restore to a world fast bleeding to death a golden era of prosperity and peace. The genius of the Gospel is the buckler of liberty and the implacable foe of all arbitrary rule. The Neros and Caligulas are impatient of its sway, but the grave is the leveller of all human dust, and virtue is the sovereignty that alone survives the eternal silence of the sepulchre. The ark of Peter could alone transport a tottering world between the dangerous boundaries of Scylla and Charybdis, the moral decadence of the Roman empire, and the all-destroying avalanche of the Hunnish invasions. Only fetters of iron could successfully restrain the enslaved populations of antiquity. The masses were forced to remain in ignorance, to ensure the abject servility of their submission. Christianity, on the contrary, lifted them from the dust and instilled in their minds the knowledge of their dignity. The happiness of humanity is the goal of human law. But the heart feels wounds that God only can heal, and the mind knows darkness that He only can dispel. The irresistible enchantments of the eloquence of St. Ambrose chased away by its charms the errors of St. Augustine, who, rising on the wings of his sublime genius, scaled the lofty summits of the City of God. The Church claims all truth and beauty as her own. The gold of Egypt and the wisdom of Plato are the property of the eternally beautiful and true. St. Gregory the theologian used

poetry and music as arms to defeat all the wisdom of Julian. "Jerusalem Delivered" and "Paradise Lost," Corneille's "Polyeucte" and the "Athalie" of Racine, are splendid apologies of the beauty of our faith. The enraptured accents of a Prophet-King were the chosen vehicle of the spirit of God to announce from afar the advent of the Redeemer. When Bossuet swept over time and space, more rapid and majestic than the eagle in its flight, and soared to the sun-steeped altitude of our faith, he presented us with one more powerful and convincing demonstration that reason supported by supernatural aid achieves its grandest and sublimest triumphs. The fruit of a doctrine is the test of its truth. We may safely affirm, when we calmly contemplate the marvellous and multitudinous effects of Christianity, that the work of civilisation was a second creation that equalled at least, and perhaps excelled, the first that was made in the order of time. It fashioned the miracle of a public conscience. It deposited in society a principle of life which, though often attacked, has been never extinguished, an imperishable germ that defies dissolution. Pope Benedict's catholic and inexhaustible energy in soothing and tempering all the horrors of the war, his divine torment for disseminating good, without difference or discrimination, among the suffering or distressed, is an outcome of that fountain of Christian charity which is pouring for ever its refreshing waters on a world that is thirsting for virtue and truth.

THE GREAT CHASTISEMENT

INFIDELITY and irreligion are the causes of the war. The atheistic philosophy of Germany, the sad falling away of faith and morality in great masses of the people, the satellites of Voltaire, who imitated his sneers without possessing his genius, the manufacture of new beliefs and new gods—these were the seeds that produced, in due time, the war and all the infamous atrocities that are following in its train. The Great Maker of the universe, the Divine Redeemer, who ransomed and regenerated a fallen world in the crimson river of His blood, was blasphemously outraged by proud and ignorant men whose "little knowledge" got into their heads and blinded them to the grand spectacle of the unity of history, and the logical conclusions to which its deep and unprejudiced study must infallibly lead as regards the Divinity of Christ. To be honest with ourselves, are there not forces even now acting amongst us opposed to the ideals and principles for which we are engaged in deadly conflict with our powerful and resourceful enemy? As long as these causes continue to exist, their necessary effects will continue also.

The results of the sublime act of Atonement have been neutralised by the abuse of the God-given faculty of liberty, which has been too often made to mean free-thought and free-love, instead of the liberty of

the children of God, which alone makes us free by delivering us from the slavery of sin. By a strange perversity of judgment there are men who, not satisfied with disregarding what Christ came to teach us, both to believe and to do, turn round and abuse religion for what is caused by its absence, and blame Christianity instead of the silly substitutes they have put in its stead. The faith and purity that redeemed Pagan Rome can again regenerate the world. Morality must exist, in States as well as individuals. The distinction between public and private morality should be obliterated for ever. Do not individuals make up States? And are not Governments an expression of the character of the people? Let us cast from us for ever these fatal doctrines and immoral practices that have undermined so many States and kingdoms in the past, and, if retained, will do so again in the future. Can we not hear, above the din of the guns in the battlefield, the angry roar of the thunders of God, and behold, above the flashes of the fire, the lightnings of His wrath? Let us waste no more time discussing idly the causes of the war, but do what in each of us lies to accomplish the Divine purpose that overrules it all. "L'homme s'agite mais Dieu le mène." Let the peoples in future make sure in what hands they place their power, an Albert or a Kaiser. Money and power are delicate instruments to handle.

Are not vultures at this moment making money out of the war? Mere party politics are a clog on true progress, and loyalty to party is too often disloyalty to truth. Don't say that "Christianity is a failure." It is only so to those who do not practise

its teachings. Give it but a trial, and then wait and see. Be a Christian first and a critic afterwards. All that is good in Socialism is found in Christianity. The Cross solves the riddle of life, and illuminates the places that are dark to the unbeliever. The work of the Atonement has never ceased. The Great Victim lives on in the members of Christ. These recurrent blood-sheddings of the nations are echoes of Golgotha. No! Christ is not dead, He is still alive and active. He has risen, to die no more.

DEEDS AND DOGMA

THE cause of the evil days in which we are now living and suffering so much is the abandonment by men of the guidance of that Church which is appointed by Heaven to be the sole and solid foundation of the happiness and prosperity of individuals and nations. The miracles that are rooted in the rock of historic evidence prove the Divinity of her origin and the finger of omnipotence that is stamped upon her brow. "Tell John the works that were wrought by My hand" was the answer that in effect Christ sent to the Precursor, "and he will know that My message has come from the skies, a message to all persons and all places on the earth, that should lose not a jot or a tittle in its course throughout the ages." The Eye that sleeps not was to keep for ever over her a jealous and indefatigable watch. The giants of intellect would be captivated by her celestial charm, and the genius of Paul and Augustine and Aquinas, in their masterpieces of reason and immortal treasure-houses of erudition, was to shatter for ever the puny efforts of shallow sophistry to undermine the impregnable citadel of truth.

And mark the absolute character of her commission! All nations, all creatures, all places, all times, constitute the range of her mighty labours, and all things the Master taught them make the programme

of their apostolate. Thus yesterday, to-day, and for ever, with no vague or stammering tongue, she proclaims the message that was delivered to the saints, and flings out to all the four winds of heaven the glorious chart of her unchanging creed. Little does she reck of the passions of men, or of the storms that iniquity may arouse about her head, but speaks for ever, with unbated breath, and in accents that cannot be mistaken, of the obligations of the moral law and the imprescriptible claims of honesty and truth. She preaches, in season and out of season, to her grand and ever-spreading empire of the soul the complete gospel she received at the beginning from Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, for all, without exception, of the generations of mankind. Faith and good works were His double mandate, the mind and the heart He claimed as His own. Two voices are resounding for ever down the corridors of time: "He who believes not will be condemned," and "As the body without the soul is dead, so faith without good works is dead." God wants no partial homage. He demands a total worship. No harvest of good deeds is possible without the application of a fertilising creed. All Pagan culture proved a failure, and Plato and Aristotle could not stem the river of corruption that swept Pagan Rome to her fall.

Where Paganism failed, Christianity succeeded. For no human ear had ever heard before such sweet and Heaven-born accents. No vision of such dazzling enchantment had fascinated the minds and hearts of men; and the thoughts of the infinite goodness of God, the Creator and the Redeemer of mankind, and of the eternal and unimaginable joys of Paradise,

drew them up out of the grovelling mire of concupiscence, while the Sacraments were the omnipotent levers that lifted them out of the dust of earth and placed them on high, in the purer and clearer atmosphere of heaven.

SOWING INFIDELITY AND REAPING WAR

SAINTLY and learned men are raised up in every age by the hand of God to be the light of the world and the defence and confirmation of the Gospel. While men plunge deeper and deeper into the heart of Nature, and wrench more and more from her grasp the great secrets that lie hidden in her keeping, the large horizon of knowledge retreats farther back with the march of time and discovery; for many a veil of obscurity overshadows the more important as the more permanent truths and matters of eternity. Martha still troubles about many things, though one thing only is necessary. The light still shines in the darkness of our night, but the darkness seems unable or unwilling to comprehend it. It is thus that our days are most learned and most ignorant, as in eclipses of the sun the world is half penetrated with light and half at the same time enshrouded in gloom. Like mariners sailing in a starry night on the treacherous waters of a mine-strewn sea, we are constantly faced with the menace of shipwreck. Inconstant and fickle are the judgments of men. The Pope who is flouted to-day is summoned on the morrow to be judge over the nations, and his rational refusal to pronounce without evidence is condemned as a crime by the modern interpreters of justice.

Historians are too often the conspirators against

truth, false documents are quoted to prop up old prejudices; "intolerance" and "Inquisition" are cries that are echoed from generation to generation to bolster up slanders that have long since been slain; the sunlight of faith is abandoned for the faint flickerings of reason, and genius itself is sacrilegiously prostituted to the perversion of truth. A literature is devoured wherein criminals are consecrated as heroes, and marriage proclaimed as a tyrannical tie; corrupted, adulterated sources are courted for the support of falsehoods, and authorities are garbled to propagate the wildest frenzies of fancy. Peter is rejected for the first pirate of the seas, the manna of truth for the very offal of error; and the Church, the great masterpiece of God, is regarded as a mere offshoot of Paganism, or an outgrowth of the fanciful theogonies of the East. The immortal discourse of Our Saviour on the Mount is degraded to a commentary of Socrates and Plato. But the voice of Him who spoke as never man spoke before can still be heard in that spiritual city which He erected on the mountain, that His light might never be hid, the voice that was heard in the prison of the Catacombs, that resounded above the discordant din of barbaric invasions, and which is still as a Pillar of Light, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, for all the generations of mankind till it is heard again when He comes as Judge, in splendour and majesty on the clouds of Heaven, to deal out to men in accordance with their deeds.

It is time for a guilty world to hearken once more to the words of the Baptist, to realise that penitence is the road to peace, and to learn a lesson from the

ancients, that disaster followed nations with the departure of their gods. The supernatural must be acknowledged in the legislation of nations, and God not relegated to solitude in the skies. To ignore His Empire is to sow disaster, and wars and revolutions must inevitably follow in its train.

THE COMING DAWN

THE evil of evils in individuals and nations is the practical ignorance of the mystery of grace. And yet it is the mightiest power upon earth. It is no romantic or pantheistic dream when we say it transfigures mortal men into gods. We may call it a garden of exquisite beauty, though its spiritual flowers are hemmed in by thorns. It is also a kingdom where all sit on thrones as princes of the realm and partake of the nature of the King of Kings. It is the truest commonwealth that ever existed, the only republic where all are one family, of sublimest origin, where all are the sons of the great Creator, and the temple where the Trinity loves to dwell. No palace erected by human hands can vie in magnificence with the soul of man when arrayed in the garment of sanctifying grace. No earthly soil can rival in fecundity the supernatural field that is sown by the Spirit, and produces a harvest that is infinite and eternal. Every thought and word and deed, however small, when informed by the grace that deifies our nature is attended by merit that changes to glory, and gives us a title to the everlasting crown. The claims of all nature cannot reach the supernatural; no created power can leap the chasm; Omnipotent love must bridge the abyss. Yet it comes without doubt to all classes of men, who make

manifest the mercy or the justice of the Most High. But God never tampers with the gift of our freedom. His kingdom is a prize to the victors in the strife. The First-born precedes us with a crown of thorns and points out the path that leads to Paradise. With fear and trembling we must walk along the way, though no light or strength ever fails us on the march. The prescience of God affects not our liberty. He predestines the recompense to merit alone, and chastisement to those who despise the call. Predestination implies no necessity. Conditional by its essence, its decrees are hypothetical, not causes but results. The saints are the glorious trophies of grace, and variegated illustrations of its beneficent power. Sinlessness possessed, not imputed merely, is the necessary accompaniment of meritorious deeds. What was black as night becomes white as snow. The blood shed on Calvary effaces every stain. All guilt is swallowed up in the ocean of mercy, as the Egyptians of old in the waters of the sea. The doctrine of Luther makes whitened sepulchres. Could the Holy Ghost cohabit with sin? Can the sap of the vine run through rotten branches or engender fruit in a dried-up tree? The soul in grace advances like the sun, which, rising in the east, climbs upwards and onward, till it reaches the zenith. It progresses from dawn to the perfect day. It has no ambition for the treasures of earth. It bends no knee at the shrine of Mammon, and builds no hopes upon shifting sands. All the fabled riches of "Ormuz and of Ind" are worthless compared with the smallest of graces. The tabernacle of our souls is the Holy of Holies where the Spirit of love and

sanctity resides, the natural and substantial action of God which accomplishes in perfection all His beautiful works. The Father and the Son are inseparable from the Spirit, for the nature of the Trinity is indivisible and one. Fashioned and moulded by the light of Heaven, the diamond of the soul scintillates with its beams and diffuses around the reflection of its rays. From the prison of our darkness, enlightened by faith, irradiate on all sides celestial fires. The beauty of God flashes out from His works. Like iron in the furnace which is changed into flame, He puts on man's soul the raiment of the nature of God. The Moses of Michael Angelo is a new creation, the image in the lake makes another sun. More marvellous still is the image of the Infinite impressed like a seal on a finite being, imparting what is essence and substance in God unto human nature as an accident of its being. The natural and supernatural come alike from God, and matter and spirit, wherever they are, in all the conditions of the creatures of His Hands, are subject to His absolute and sovereign sway. No portion of His work can evade His control and clash in hostile contact with another. There is no false note in the symphonies of heaven. Apparent conflict there may sometimes be, but time scatters many a mist and cloud. It is still, after all, the darkness of the night. The dawn will soon break which makes all things clear. The veil will be drawn. No mirrors of earth will then be needed. We shall look on our God face to face as He is.

CHRIST THE CONQUEROR

THE sublime is a height that even genius seldom reaches. But Christ is at home on the summits of the mountain. Paradise is His Father's home. He is the sun, all others are but rays. His doctrine is a land that knows no horizon, an ocean that brooks no shore. It is the only compass that can guide the groping mind in the darkness and lead it to success in its searchings after truth. He ran counter to all methods in prosecuting His plans. No earthly magnet drew men to His side. No visible recompense was offered to His followers. In the place of the powerful seductions of time, He held out alone the hopes of eternity. Universal He intended to be the application of His principles. The highest, as the lowest, were subservient to His Law. Masters had to learn to be servants, the first to be the last. The poor were to be henceforth the aristocracy of Christ. He courted not, like Socrates, the cultured few, but publicans and sinners were the objects of His choice. Not John only, but Magdalen He took to His Heart, and the penitent thief drew His promise from the cross. The society He founded was not Greek or Roman, but Catholic or Universal, embracing all ages, all places, and all men. Hence, national Churches cannot claim to be Catholic. The very name they bear proclaims their limitations and marks their boundaries. Like Himself, His doctrines were

never to change. The philosophy of Plato, the science of Newton, the geology of Cuvier, lose much of their prestige as they descend the rivers of time, but the teachings of Christ show no shadow of alteration. The pride of the Pharisee excited His indignation. "How will you escape the everlasting fire," said He, "varnishing the outside of the vase? You charge others with burdens which you cannot carry yourselves. Hypocrites you are, that snap at the mite and devour the houses of widows. The more rigorous will be your damnation. You violate what is important and principal in the Law, the practice of justice and mercy. You strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You are whitened sepulchres, with an outside fair and comely, and within you are nothing but corruption and decay." But, stern as He was towards the sin that was petrified in pride, in all other cases He was brimful of tenderness, and overflowed with patience and love. He bade us address Him by the title of Father, and to look on ourselves as His dearest children. He called Judas "friend." He wept over Lazarus and Jerusalem. He washed the feet of His Apostles, and gave Mary the sinner, in return for the precious pearls of her tears, the incomparable pearl and privilege of His love. Such words and deeds raised the world from its hinges, and rolled back for ever the current of the ages.

He walked no crooked, devious path of policy and called it wisdom and diplomacy, nor yielded to the clamours of a guilty compromise that concealed itself beneath the mask of so-called tact and discretion. He championed no popular cause, nor snatched at the

aspirations of the hour, to float on the crest of a victorious wave. But He swam against the tide of the time in which He lived. He aimed at destroying all the gods of Rome, and He conquered that city that had conquered all the world. A general without an army, He triumphed over those eagles that were hitherto invincible. For pride and pleasure, the great despots of old, He substituted Himself, and put an end to the worship of a thousand idols. He became the solar system of the intellectual and moral world, and captured conviction, not with cannons but the Cross. This transformation of the world, colossal in conception, resolution, and execution, was a work that was stamped with the impress of the finger of God. In the imperishable words of the great exile of St. Helena, "I have a knowledge of men. Jesus Christ was no man. He was God."

O Creator, Redeemer, and Preserver of mankind, who holdest the reins of universal empire, and wieldest the sceptre of sovereign domination, look down on the chaos and dissolution that hold captive the great nations of Europe; draw forth, as is Thy wont, good results from evil; put back into the scabbard the sword that is already dripping with so much carnage. May Thy righteous wrath and indignation at the indifference and forgetfulness of men be at length appeased by this mighty holocaust of blood, that the reconstruction and new creation of the world that is impending may extend Thy Kingdom over the souls of men, and so this horrid curse of war will be turned into a heavenly benediction, and we who have sown so abundantly in tears may reap in our day a glorious harvest of union, harmony, and peace.

THE TRIUMPHS OF THE RISEN CHRIST

SOME time after Christ had arisen from the tomb and manifested Himself to the holy women, the Apostles and disciples at the sepulchre, in Jerusalem, on Mount Thabor and Mount Olivet, the Apostles divided among themselves the world of their day, to bring it by their zealous labours under the sweet captivity of Christ. St. Peter, that lately had shivered like a leaf in the wind at the voice of a feeble woman, on receiving the Holy Ghost exulted in his strength and fought like a lion the battle of the Faith, till he found, like his Master, a second Calvary in the capital of the Empire. St. James in Judea, St. Simon in Egypt, St. John in Greece, and St. Thomas in India, proclaimed the great truth of the Risen Saviour. The proto-martyr St. Stephen saw the splendours of Heaven while they stoned him to death, and the Beloved Disciple conquered martyrdom itself by renewing his youth in the bath of the burning oil. All the world was transformed and transfigured in Christ. The father ruled no longer with an iron hand; the mother was no longer a play-toy in the home; the child, however weak, and the slave, however old, were all raised to the dignity of the family of Christ.

Gethsemane and Golgotha are inseparable from Christianity. Perverted genius and brute persecution have always assailed it. They endeavoured to seal

up the lips of the Apostles. But as well try to seal up the darkness of the night and block the onrush of the coming dawn. The Word flashed like lightning to the ends of the earth, and the Pentecostal fires set the world aflame. Christianity spoke the language of Cicero and of Homer, it was taught in the classic schools of Alexandria, and became soon familiar in the palaces of the Cæsars. The Christians were flung in such legions to the lions that Diocletian struck a medal, in the prematurity of his zeal, to commemorate the extinction of the Christian name. But how criminal and foolish to contend against God! The young Agnes was a match for the eagles of Rome, and the martyrs of the Coliseum cemented Christianity. Julian was a failure, Arius was a comet, and Attila and Mahomet fell helpless in their turn. Avignon and the Schism passed away like a dream; the brave sons of Ignatius arrested the "Reform," the French Revolution expired in its excesses, and Pius at Fontainebleau brought Napoleon to St. Helena.

The history of the past is a prophecy of the future. Modernism and Kultur are the creatures of a day. "Magna est veritas et prævalebit." One writer alone, the "Angel of the Schools," is an impregnable fortress against which the infidel, the libertine, and the apostate will rage and contend for ever in vain.

THE MEANING OF THE RESURRECTION

THE Resurrection of Christ is the consummation and continuation of His earthly career, the realisation of the promises, the accomplishment of His conquest over sin and death, the completion of His triumph by the arms of the cross. In the words of Augustine, "Christus resurrexit, absoluta res est." Eternal life was begotten of His sepulchre. Not the unsubstantial pageant of the pagan heaven, but the infinite reality of the beatific vision. God's glory sprang from the grave; His triumph arose from His ashes. The glory of men often dies in their tomb, and their memory follows them to the earth. Those who flattered them while they lived are their censors after death, for flattery is a parasite that dies with the motives that inspired it. Death is a touchstone that tells the truth and tears away the tinsel that hid it for a time. Ignominy increases with the measure of elevation, and what height of station made more visible in life is still more ruthlessly laid bare by the pitiless scythe of Death.

But the glory of virtue is a glory that endures. St. Louis and St. Edward are names that are immortal, and St. Francis of Sales and St. Francis of Borgia are enshrined for ever in the hearts of men. Christ's life and Resurrection are reflected in His Church, and the miracle of His Resurrection should

be followed by ours. Is not loyalty easy to so good a Master? It is noble to live not for time but eternity. Are not crowns and sceptres mere dust in His sight? Is not heaven a possession worth all our sacrifices? Such thoughts made the martyrs revel in their pains, and the golden vision that flashed upon their eyes made all earthly sufferings a mere empty phantom. Let this glorious mystery appear also in your lives. Return not to the prison where you lay so long captive. Be a trophy to His Resurrection, to swell the pageant of His triumph. Seek no repose till the battle is over, and keep the lamp lit till the Bridegroom comes. Give joy to the angels and the dear ones who have gone to their rest before you. Forget not Him who watches over your souls and condemn not to sterility the labours of His zeal.

May this mystery of love be reflected in our day: Look down, O Lord, with compassion on the holocaust which crimsons so many fields of carnage. May the sight of such slaughter appease Thy wrath, Thy angel of peace reconcile all hearts, that a gladdened and resurgent world may serve Thee once more, as in better days, with all the love and homage that is Thy due.

PETER THE ROCK

ALL the works of God, both natural and supernatural, are bound up together in union and harmony, and the noblest aspirations of the human soul find their highest expression in the dogma and moral teachings of Christianity. Union in variety characterises her doctrines; union is their end and final repose. The ultimate summary of all religion, the relations established between the creature and the Creator, have their primal origin, development, and culmination in the most perfect union of God and man. The Captive of Love in the tabernacles of our churches is the indispensable condition and feature of her worship. The beautiful visions of the Prophets of old were fixed on the loving figure of the Emmanuel, and the Pagan creations of inimitable art manifested, though in marble, the invincible desire to make visible to their senses, as if living amongst them, the Deity of infinite and everlasting love. In the shady walks of the Garden of Eden, God conversed with Adam as a loving friend. This, alas! was a dream of short duration. Later on, in the marvellous union of the Incarnation, God's visit was brief and confined to a few. Veiled in the garment of our human flesh, He is veiled again in the Sacrament of His Love.

Separation is the thorn that embitters human life, the drug that makes war so cruel a draught. If the power of a father were the equal of his love, his heart

would repine for some real presence to fill up the gap created by death. If distance alone interposed a barrier between hearts whose love was profound and sincere, would not all the inventions of our modern genius be most eagerly seized to give temporary relief in affliction that only real presence could heal? Let infidels refuse to believe as they will, but they dare not blaspheme nature's fondest dream: to be ever united to those whom we love. In the union of the Eucharist, most admirable though it be, there is something still which our hearts require. The abandonment of Bethlehem and Calvary are there, and the stony silence and solitude of the Sepulchre, but we miss the enchantment of the Redeemer's voice, the magical word that could still the storm, and the Shepherd who gathered in the wandering sheep. We find all this in the Vicar of Christ. In him we still hear the echoes of His voice, proclaiming the truth to all ends of the earth, as it once resounded by the lake of Galilee. Christ present on our altars makes saints, it is true, the heroes and the heroines who sacrifice their lives and die for His sake. But the Pope alone can make the pastors of His Church and ward off the danger of heresy and schism. The fall of Alexandria, of Antioch, and Constantinople, and defections in the Sees of both England and Germany, prove that Peter, presiding in the Chair of the Vatican, is still necessary to feed the sheep and the lambs, and to keep immaculate, without spot or stain, the magnificent unity of His immortal Church.

When Luther fell away from the faith of his childhood, he still clung to belief in the Sacrament of Love, but little by little with loyalty to Peter belief in the

Eucharist itself disappeared, and in time the whole edifice of the doctrines of Christianity fell shattered to pieces when the solid foundation of Peter was gone. What miracles are accumulated to constitute the Papacy! Mere human lips, the vehicles of error, are transfigured into oracles of infallible truths, and converted into bearers of His immortal message. A man prone to sin, sprung from fallen Adam, becomes the source for the world of all virtue and grace. Though not always a saint, yet he never defiled the sacred deposit entrusted to his keeping. The Popes form a chain from Peter to Benedict that in all the ages has never been broken. Like the Phœnix, they ever arise from their ashes. Man's life upon earth is the flight of a bird, but the Pope is the victor of time and space. All the powers and evil passions of men try to stifle his voice, but from dungeons and exiles the voice is still heard, for the word on his lips is the word of God.

The Pope, like Christ, is Divine and human. As Pope he is holy, infallible, immortal; as man he can sin, make mistakes, and die. What a mighty power rests on so weak a support! What a powerful king on so feeble a throne! How fragile the fate of all monarchs of earth! Revolutions, in an instant, sweep dynasties away. But Peter is the barque which no storm can wreck, the immovable rock that defies the waves. Surely this man resembles no other, his companion or peer is not seen upon earth. He is truly the human veil of the Eternal, he is fated to witness the end of all things; his appointed destiny is never to die.

A MARTYR-DYNASTY

THE Pope is the miracle that achieved the stupendous work of the reformation of the world, the supernatural Atlas that bears on weak shoulders the colossal burden of the moral regeneration of mankind. The truth and justice that were introduced into the affairs of men are radiations of that faith and love whose ardent professions obtained for Peter the most eminent of all earthly exaltations. As God by His conservation never ceases in the act of creation, so the Pope, in the ever-active energies of the Church, is its light, its life, its soul, and its very being. He may justly be called the sun in the heaven of the soul. The gospels, traditions, and the fragments of truth that are scattered in the writings of philosophers, are streamlets that flow from his perennial source. All grace is from him, the indefatigable dispenser of God's love to man. In the millions of absolutions and Holy Communions that are constantly being administered in all parts of the world, in the self-denying lives of the labourers in His vineyard, in the martyrs who made the great sacrifice in His service, in the heroines who spent lives in charity and prayer, in the powers exercised by all bishops and priests, the Pope is the root and the only foundation on which all as a necessary condition depends. He is called, and he is, the Father of the Faithful, and the origin of all supernatural life. All the virginal fascination of

the Beloved Disciple and the sublime and impetuous enthusiasm of St. Andrew could not draw upon either that intense look of interest, that prophetic glance which Christ cast on Peter ("intuitus eum"). As the sculptor beholds in the block of marble the material for the great creation of his genius, as God beheld in the dust of Eden the majestic lineaments of the father of our race, so Jesus, when He looked on the face of Simon, and promised him the suitable name of Peter, saw the future foundation of His edifice, the bearer of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, the confirmer in the faith, if all else should fail, and the Christlike love that would never falter. He who bore away presumptuously the Eternal in his arms, and dared in his folly to tempt the Everlasting, could not suffer his Vicegerent to escape unscathed. But the prayer of Christ was not made in vain, and whatever might happen, his faith should be secure.

Peter, like his Master, is predestined to the cross. The dynasty of the Popes is all crimsoned in blood. In the three first centuries all but two were martyred. From Constantine to Charlemagne, sixty-two Popes reigned—an epoch of glory one well might imagine—yet at this time it was that Liberius was exiled, that Alaric and Genseric fought with Innocent and Leo, that St. Symmachus saw his priests cruelly strangled in the streets, that Agapitus and Vigilius died in ignominious exile. From Charlemagne to St. Louis there were eighty-four Popes. It was Calvary still—St. Leo III. and Pascal I. are both the victims of a cruel persecution, Pope Gregory IV. sees the ruin of St. Peter's, John X. ends his days by a violent death, John XI. dies imprisoned in the Castle of St. Angelo.

Thus the sad procession goes on through the ages. Further, we encounter the great Gregory VII., whom the twin-crown of sanctity and genius could not save, who "loved justice and hated iniquity," and who, therefore, died poor and abandoned in Saverno. From the saintly Louis to Louis XIV., sixty-two sat in turn in the Chair of Peter. Gregory IX. is conspicuous among them. He dies of grief to see Frederic II., though a Christian prince, assisting the Saracens in their work of destruction. Clement V. inaugurates the period when the Popes were held as captives at Avignon. Then Clement VII., in bitterness of heart, saw the infamous Luther proclaimed Pope in St. Peter's, and Sixtus V. saw France apostatising in the miserable wake of Germany and England. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries add new tragic scenes to the drama of the Papacy. Clement XIV., with a knife at his throat, reluctantly surrendered to suppress the Jesuits. Pio Nono is stripped of his temporal crown, the horrors of the war killed Pius X., and Benedict XV., for his boundless beneficence, is rewarded by the onslaughts of an unprincipled Press.

Go, visit the Catacombs and the consecrated prisons where so many of the Pontiff-martyrs died. An unearthly aroma seems to fill the air, and the stones of their sepulchres take voice and cry aloud, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has desired to have you and sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, and, in spite of all sufferings, exiles, and death, you will rise, like the Christ, triumphant from the tomb, and your reign will endure to the end of all time."

THE TWO-EDGED SWORD

GOD is Charity—a fathomless ocean whence beneficent streams of overflowing abundance are poured out on the bodies and souls of men, a furnace of mighty and inexhaustible power from which issues the twin flame that regenerates the world, the love that is inseparable, of God and of man. The love of God runs into and blends with the love of man; thus, who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. God calls charity a precept that is new and His own, the heavenly mark which authenticates His Disciples, the standard of all human observance, and the rule of the judgment to come. Goodness is on earth what is most like to God, it is sunshine in the homes of misery, and milk and honey to the hearts of the desolate. We must love our neighbour as God has loved us, with the love which the Samaritan bore to the Jew, the love of a brother and a member of Christ, the love that endured the traitor's false kiss, that promised His heaven to the penitent thief and died like a malefactor on the scaffold of the Cross. Selfishness and charity cannot live side by side, they are forces that wage a continual war. Sacrifice is the touchstone that tells true love. Flattery betimes wears a treacherous mask and deceives the unwary by its alluring wiles. But "do unto others what you expect from them" is the only sure road that leads to the accomplishment of all modern dreams.

This is the porch of the Temple of Peace. With this principle followed by individuals and nations, all jealousies and rivalries would cease among men; we should study the needs, not the faults, of our neighbours; "Divide et impera" would be statesmanship no longer, and union of hearts would be the diplomacy of the future. Charity is not narrow, it is Catholic in its range; no favourites are cherished within its all-embracing arms, for Christ loved all men. Favouritism and tyranny have been always allies; the love that is partial only tends to destroy. "We must open," says David, "our hand to the indigent and extend both our hands to the poor." This is no empty repetition of words to serve the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, no useless pleonasm without a deeper purpose. The word of God is a two-edged sword; magnificence is the feature of all His pronouncements, super-abundance in all is the essence of His being. In the text David speaks of, the body and the soul both clamour for our aid. We must give our possessions, and, if need be, our lives, with the offering of the hand all the sympathy of our hearts. It is nature's cry to all that are human, the superfluity of the rich is the property of the poor. By charity we share God's attribute of mercy. He who gives is made richer than he who receives, and wonderful is the harvest that follows in its train. Daniel tells the King of Babylon it will expiate his sins, and the Pharisees are assured it will blot out their iniquities. The heart of the poor is an altar of sacrifice and the offerings laid on it bring the "hundredfold."

The loss to luxury brings a higher gain. What

a model and a spur to our charity is He who at all times has scattered His blessings upon earth, whose sunshine and rain fall everywhere. Yet these alms of creation were too little for His love. His alms of Redemption were no less than Himself. We ourselves can, in measure, be a God to the poor. When God left His glory and the majesty of His kingdom, shall not men leave their palace, their pomp and their pride, to minister to those whose lives were most similar to God's when on earth, the left hand not knowing what is done by the right, but content to have God as sole witness of their deeds; bearing patiently also the faults of the poor as God has borne patiently with their own, and looking for the recompense from the Hands of Him who forgets not the cup of water that is given in His name? Then the God of Bethlehem will deliver them from evil; in the depths of tribulation they will thrill with rapture; they will triumph over all who had plotted their ruin; and the Hand of God's Providence, stretched over them in life, will be laid when dying on their throbbing temples. It will turn them with tenderness on their bed of pain, and when life, like a candle, goes out in the dark, will conduct them securely across the abyss, to the Kingdom where charity reigns supreme, and where those alone who practised it on earth will sit on bright thrones with palms in their hands, and with crowns on their heads of immortal splendour.

THE POWER OF THE WORD

THE origin of the Word is eternal. In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was God. The Father expressed Himself from Eternity by the Word, and the Word was an adequate reflection of Himself. So the word of man reflects, though incompletely, the thought of his mind. The word is a power in the senate and the pulpit, and in the mouth of the general at a critical moment is an element that decides the victory. It symbolises the two great mysteries of our religion, the Incarnation in its relation between the thought and the word, and the Eucharist in the mysterious multiplication and completeness of its communications to men.

In the Word there is something that is divine, and it is not only a sacrilege but a kind of deicide to extinguish its light or neutralise its use. Hence, absolute was the confidence which Christ had in its power. "Go, teach all nations" was a mighty mandate, and the greatest mission ever given unto man. St. Peter and his colleagues were no Cæsars or Napoleons with armies at their back. Yet, while Cæsar expired on the Ides of March and his great ambitions were buried with his ashes, while Napoleon's star set for ever on the field of Waterloo, the Word of the apostle subjugated the world and its effects remain to our day. The Jew who had so

often baffled Vespasian, and resisted so stubbornly the armies of Titus, was no easy prey to the zeal of the apostle. But Peter bravely bearded the Sanhedrim and all the great prejudices of the Jews, and won them by the Word in myriads to Christ. Three times did St. Paul travel over the world, while sowing abundantly the seed of the Word and raising new temples for the worship of the Crucified. Their conquests continued on the lips of Origen and Justin and Tertullian, of Ignatius and Polycarp the Martyrs, of Victor and Maurice and Sebastian the gallant soldiers, and of Agnes the virgin heroine, for whose infant limbs no chains small enough could be found, and whose greatest torture was to be kept so long waiting for death which was to admit her to the presence of her heavenly spouse. What could Nero or Caligula against heroes such as these? So the Word grew in power with the progress of time and arrayed itself in splendour in the accents of Chrysostom and the genius of Jerome and Ambrose and Augustine. Then the rough barbarians swept down from the North, marking their pathway with rivers of blood, but the words of the saints and holy bishops were there, to check the wild avalanche in its impetuous course. St. Thomas of Canterbury and Gregory VII. and the great St. Bernard soon converted them, and infused new youthful blood into the old veins of Christianity. The Word was taken up by St. Francis and St. Dominic, the founders of the Orders that immortalised their names. St. Catherine in her turn in the days of the schism restored by her eloquence the Holy Pontiffs to Rome, while St. Francis Xavier, the apostle of the Indies,

rivalled the great labours of St. Paul, and gained not only individuals but whole kingdoms by his burning words to the service of his Master.

Yes, truly the Word is a power that is irrepressible. "Non possumus non loqui" and "Verbum non est alligatum" are words that have not been written in vain. For, indeed, has not the Word conquered all the forces of persecution, refuted all the sophisms of the heretic and the infidel, and overpowered even the all-destroying influence of time? The subtle Greek and the Roman philosopher submitted to its sweet persuasive sway and the plodding German and the quick but fickle Gaul surrendered to a force that was more than of earth. It compelled the attention of the Druid and fascinated by its mild incantations the Hun, the Goth, and the Vandal. The temples of the gods fell to dust at its approach, and the impregnable citadels of human passion fell victims to the music of its voice. The dignity of its unity contrasted with the never-ending varieties of error, and while the Gnostics in the second century had thirty-three contradictory sects, while the Arians possessed sixteen different symbols, and Augustine counted eighty-eight varieties of belief in his day, the Word was ever one and always the same. False science soon vanished in the sunlight of its teaching, and physics and astronomy, natural history, and geology have in turn, from its enemies, become witnesses to its truth. For the ignorance of infancy could not cope with the venerable maturity of age, and the hypotheses of novel systems with the unchangeable utterance of truth. It borrows no light from a so-called science or progress, for it is the

"light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," the seed that fertilises on every soil and the ship that has ridden the tempest for two thousand years. Dynasties and empires have lived their little day and great Rome herself, that was built to be immortal, is a heap of ruins. The Word, on the contrary, has survived all revolutions in our history. It is the grain that grew into a mighty tree. The axe of the enemy has only reinvigorated its youth. It recks not the conspiration of all the powers of destruction, for it rests on the Rock of the Eternal Promise "I shall be with you all days to the consummation of the world."

THE WEAPON OF THE WORD

THE Word of Christ in the mouths of His ministers is a sword which no blade of Damascus can rival, the grand Excalibur of the soldiers of Christ, which is ever keen and ever ready to fight His battles against the countless hosts of His enemies. It is a trumpet to rouse up a slumbering world, and a voice that proclaims to all nations and times that the principles of the Gospel are the only remedy for the ills and infirmities of mankind. It is, again, the shining light that points out to the mariner the port from which he came and the haven of his destination; the compass on what otherwise were a pathless sea, and a guiding star through the labyrinths of the desert. It is the grand asylum for the pilgrims of error and the sure solid refuge of the children of misfortune; the lever that alone can lift up the world to conditions and standards that can guarantee a genuine and permanent peace. It can work with success where no treaties can avail, and achieve what armies cannot hope to accomplish. No dreadnought or submarine can cope with its power; it is mighty among the mightiest: "Magna est et prævalebit." It is a helmet and breastplate in life, and a strong coat of mail at the hour of our death, and keeps ever living, as on holy altars, the memories of Christ in the hearts of the elect. It is the manna from Heaven, the food for the soul, identical in substance though

changing in form to suit the ever-shifting current of the time; ever ancient and ever new, having no beginning and destined to have no end.

All the scaffolding of falsehold will crumble to the dust, all the frauds of diplomatists will melt into air, but the Word of Christ will remain for ever, as a lamp in the dark hour of grief, and a balm for the bitterest bruises of the heart. Love truth, and fear not all the malice of your foes. No fire, however fierce, or hatred and malignity, no base machination of jealousy or envy, can rob you of the splendour of the promises of God. No dungeon can be found so dark and so deep as to shut from your eyes the glory of God's face. Bright flowers will spring up from the floor of your prison, and rivers of refreshment in arid waste. The seeds you thought sterile will bear copious fruit, and be gathered without fail in the garners of eternity. Poverty and persecution will be turned to your credit, and what the world called defeat will be changed into victory. The martyrs in their gratitude embraced their executioners, for the alchemy of the saints can draw good from evil, and the Cross is the surest and safest road to Heaven. There are Attilas still who are instruments of God to execute His purposes for the children of predilection. The man whom neither gold nor place can purchase is nobler in his poverty than the king on his throne. Principle and honour are pearls above price, and their presence among men exhales a sweet odour. There are some who have Scripture continually on their lips, but whose hearts are strangers to charity and kindness; who will govern others, but not govern themselves.

The Word of Christ is sincerity and truth, and reprobates profession when disjoined from practice. The Pharisee is a gilded sepulchre in its sight, and the hypocrite an object of contempt and abomination. Many judges in life will be criminals at death, when the heartlessness of avarice and the scandals of administration will be weighed in the balance of the justice of God. Even now there are retributions for malice and wrong, and no pomp of purple or imperial garb can cover the meanness of a sordid soul. The hoardings of misers accumulate cares, and spoil them of the peace that is the patrimony of the poor. We can see in the union of culture and barbarism which so strongly characterises the Germans of our day how powerless are all the efforts of man when cut off and divorced from the light of the Gospel. It is time to surrender the shadows of worship and cultivate the realities of the ancient Faith. Let trusts and properties be no longer confounded, let social Chinese walls be levelled to the ground, and all classes of men be brought closer together in one heart and one soul, like the Christians of old. Let the feeble religious creations of men acknowledge, at last, in the Catholic Faith, the unchanging religion that was founded by Christ, which history, sciences, and philosophies have assailed in vain, and which is the grand secret and indispensable condition of that union of all nations and men which has been so long the fond dream and noble aspiration of mankind.

THE VOICE OF GOD

GOD has spoken to the world in language of clear and unmistakable accents, and the message it conveyed is one and indivisible, addressed without distinction to all the children of men. The waywardness of man's will, the imbecility of reason, and the narrowness of vision, caused by isolated and exclusive pursuits, are formidable barriers to the reception of His Word. Pride's withering breath, like a blast from the desert, dries the dew of Heaven, and shrivels up the sacred plant of the Spirit, while the worship of the senses emasculates the soil, and renders it insensible to influences from on high. Circumstances also affect our dispositions: we are all more or less the creatures of our surroundings, and we cast off contemptuously in the sun of good fortune what we welcome with ardour in the night of affliction. The voice of God is a powerful ally, all genius and art both flourish in its presence, and poetry and music are inspired by its words. Divorced from their guidance, all force leads to chaos; the river that overflows devastates the prairies, but bound by its banks it fertilises the fields. The engine whose movements are confined by the rails is a comfort and blessing to man, but, deserting the track, it plunges to destruction.

God's voice in the sources of Scripture and Tradi-

tion establishes no impediment to the operations of reason. As the microscope and telescope aid the naked eye and supply us with phenomena for the building up of law, as reason weighs the motives of the credibility of our faith, so all the revelations which God's love made unto man lift him up to those spheres he could never have attained by the hopeless efforts of unaided reason. The record of philosophers is a permanent plagiarism on all the exploded errors of the past, and a miserable "perhaps" is the sole consummation of all their efforts in solving the great problems of the human mind. They commit us to regions of perpetual doubt, to lone, dreary tracts of everlasting mists, where the wandering Jews of benighted intelligence are marching to the goal of an imaginary progress. The torment of the Infinite is a worm that never dies, the plaints of the sceptics resound through all ages, and the cry of despair ever echoes on their lips. Irreligion is a chimera without existence in history; the Cross, on the contrary, is the centre of gravitation. Faith no doubt is a sky overcast by dark clouds, but it scintillates with myriads of most beautiful constellations. Not all are eagles like Augustine and Aquinas to fix the loftier summits of our faith, but long centuries of Christianity are proofs for the simplest, and the heroism of the martyrs is an argument without reply.

The Infinite to the finite must be always obscure, but God's word is a rock on which safely to rest, a sun shooting light into every cloud, and an anchor which can steady us in every storm. It is idle to call it a petrifaction of the mind. If the basis is divine the superstructure is human. To yield to evidence is no

chain of bondage. Did his faith hinder Secchi in his reading of the stars? Full knowledge of anything is impossible here below: a small grain of dust is a puzzle for the wisest. What is light? We know not, we but know its effects. Even Newton could not give us a definition of attraction. Reason without faith is a mutilated knowledge, but, as both come from God, both are shielded by the Church. We must ever bear in mind that faith is a virtue. We can lose it by our fault and recover it if we will. The state of incredulity is man's own creation; hence miscreant or unbeliever means an evildoer. In Baptism Christians receive it in germ; as a plant, it requires cultivation and care. The tears of the penitent and the sun-rays of love make the roses and lilies spring up in its soil. For the poor and the suffering it is the goal of consolation; for the exile and pilgrim in this valley of tears it is a rainbow of hope and eternal promise. Our greatest enemies it transforms into friends, and our evil geniuses into benefactors in disguise.

From the ruins of all hopes and the wrecks of our ambition faith kisses the hand that chastises when it loves, and sees sparklings of splendour in the darkest of skies. From the rack where the martyrs lay writhing in pain they beheld, like St. Stephen, Heaven opened above their heads. Thus love is the beginning, and love is the end. God spoke to us through love; we believe in Him through love, and love will be the crown and consummation of all.

THE DIVINE SOUVENIR

IT has ever been an aspiration of the children of men to live after death a kind of second life in the memory of mankind. *Defunctus adhuc loquitur* we would all have inscribed on our tombstones in the sepulchre. But the truth is too evident that all men are mortal, and in time disappear, not only from sight, but also from thought and remembrance. When Josue piled stones on the bed of the Jordan, he wished that all future generations should remember how the waters of the river had miraculously divided to make way for the passage of the people of God. Leonidas, the hero of Sparta, wrote this glorious epitaph on the tablet of the rock, "You that pass by here, tell Sparta we have fallen in the fight for her freedom." The arch of Titus and the Trajan column, the Pyramids of Egypt and the round towers of Ireland will in time all crumble into dust and the river of forgetfulness sweep over where they stood. But the souvenir of God must be worthy of Himself. No gold or silver ornament, no precious stone or snow-white pearl could satiate a love that is infinite and everlasting and that made all the world by the "fiat" of His will. Our image in a portrait, a lock of our hair, or a trifle we have prized in life are all that we can leave as mementoes to those we love. But God's infinite power is the servant of His love, and executes with

fidelity all the purposes of His heart. He bequeathed us, therefore, no less than Himself to reside with us as friend and companion for ever.

In vain do unbelievers say such a faith is impossible. What philosopher can tell us the essence of matter? What mortal can venture to measure the Omnipotent? Is not Nature herself all studded with mystery? We see all things only *per speculum et in aenigmate.* Mystery is the atmosphere that surrounds the Almighty. All touching Him, though remotely, must needs be incomprehensible.

Transubstantiation is no novelty in the universe. Did not Moses the lawgiver change a rod into a serpent and Jesus in turn change water into wine? Do not all of us ourselves change continually our vegetable and animal food into our flesh and blood? Shall not God then be able to change bread if He wills into His flesh as well? To call Christ's words a figure is a gratuitous assertion. Its admission would involve other truths in its train. The Crib and the Cross would be changed into fictions and Christianity itself be transformed into a myth. Metaphysics and the sciences present puzzles to the learned. How faint is the affinity between blocks of marble and the light that in a second travels seven times round the globe! How imperfect is our knowledge of time and of space! Two millions of animalcula can stand on a pin point, and heat can give water four thousand times its bulk. The conquest of the wireless seems to triumph over space, while the gramophone and the cinema dispute the sovereignty of death. The deceit of the senses in this Mystery is unfounded, for the substance of things

we can never see. The accidents alone are visible to the senses, and these we see both before and after consecration, absolutely and identically the same. The *Magnum Mysterium* is undoubtedly still there, but the greater the mystery the mightier is the miracle of the universal belief whose pretended introduction leaves no visible trace on any of the high-roads of history. The faith, on the contrary, in this marvellous doctrine has accumulated through the ages the most opulent productions both of nature and of art, to adorn those grand temples where all point and converge to the altar of sacrifice as the centre and culmination of their worship and ceremonial. Man may justly be called an abridgment of creation, and the bridge joining matter to the world of spirit. By God's union with us He absorbs all the worlds, and deposits within us a germ of resurrection. Holy souls have felt keenly the Divinity of His presence and experienced at moments the joys of the Blessed. How often have the children of sorrow and misfortune found a deep well of joy and a nectar of sweetness in the heavenly manna and the wine that makes virgins! How often has Our Lord in the sacrament of His love imparted new courage to the children of the Cross, to bear patiently their burden and fight life's rude battle perseveringly to the end. The Eucharist inspired the great picture of Raphael, and San Pietro the immortal monument of Michel Angelo. It was the Eucharist that infused divine strength into the martyrs and made Ignatius of Antioch and Agnes the Virgin bid defiance to the horrors of death and all the savage tortures of their executioners. To the exile who trembles on the

frontiers of eternity, the Eucharist has been ever a source of consolation, and a rainbow of hope flung across the abyss, whose darkness and uncertainty would fill us with dread were not He who loved us with an everlasting love keeping faithfully watch and ward by his side and awaiting with impatience the thrice-happy hour that would bring him in safety to his home for ever.

LOVE AND THE LAW

EUSEBIUS, the distinguished historian, relates how in the second century the saintly Bishop Denis of Corinth congratulated the Roman Church on the glorious reputation she had acquired for the greatness of her charity. Charity, indeed, has always been the characteristic note of Christianity, and the source and foundation of all genuine worship. All pretence of religion without charity is vain. God's eternal and essential nature is love, and Christ, the ideal of all human love, is the power that inspired those heroic deeds which have excited the admiration of all peoples and of all times. When O'Connell, the great Irish patriot, was at the gate of death, he made a testament, the sublimest recorded in the history of the world: "My body," he said, "I bequeath to Ireland, my heart I leave to Rome, and my soul I commend into the hands of God." But beautiful as this testament undoubtedly is, it dwindles into insignificance when compared with the love that God has exhibited, in surrendering Himself as our property and possession, not only for time, but for eternity. Terence, the Latin poet, arrived at no mean standard of moral excellence when he wrote that magnificent line: "Homo sum, nihil humani a me alienum puto": "I am a man, and all that is human has an interest for me." But Terence only feebly echoed the teachings of Christianity, for love is the climax and culmination of our Faith, the zenith

and the goal of our religion. Faith soars above the shadows of time, hope bridges the dark abysses of our pilgrimage, but love survives all else in eternity. The star of love that stood over Bethlehem is shining still in our heaven to-day, and leading large hosts of honest seekers to the home where Truth resides. Love is the soul and life-blood of the Church; it is the ideal of the artist, which he can never adequately express. Great poets caught inspiration from the romance of God's Love, and Dante and Milton are creations of Christianity. Music reached its highest in the service of the Church, and the Masses of Mozart are works that cannot die. The Angels of Angelico enraptured Michel Angelo, who thought that they had just dropped down from Heaven! "The Dream of Gerontius" is a masterpiece of Catholicity, and Bethlehem and Calvary are great pulpits for all time. Love teaches us the kinship that binds all creatures and the unity and variety that shadow forth God. The motion of an atom pulses through all creation. Love knows no circumscription, no selfish isolation. "Non nobis nati sumus," said the ancient: "we have not been born for ourselves alone." As the fruit follows seed, so Nemesis follows those who transgress this law. To love one another is an absolute mandate. The observance of this precept suffers no exemption. Justice, sooner or later, will be rendered to all. He who favours the few, at the expense of the many, corrupts both himself and the one he favours, and patronage and promotion, when unequal and unjust, thrust out of their predestined orbits the vessels of election for the purposes of God. He who puts out the light in himself or another makes

alliance with the spirit of darkness, and takes his stand by his side. Love speaks always truth, though it hurts to heal, and shuns as a serpent the opiate of the flatterer. Benevolence is a joy to the giver and receiver, while malevolence is a misery and an injury to both. Love is the oil and ointment of the world; it shines like the sun on all the children of men and transfigures with splendour every portion of creation. The lives of the saints were all coloured with its hues. Like the goodness of God, at the cradle of time, it diffuses and radiates its beneficence over all, and none are excluded from its bountiful beams. It is the golden key that unlocks Nature's treasure-house, the inner eye that penetrates the secrets of her heart. Every shell on the beach, every flower of the field, like the stars of heaven, all sing to the soul, and present him who loves with a constant festival. "The rosy-fingered dawn" and the shifting moods of ocean, the flushes of the morning and the transfigurations of sunset, are to him the porches of Paradise. The majesty of the woods or a lake in the hills seems clad with immortality. Every mountain and vale, like the lines of Holy Writ, is a well of inspiration. God's face is visible over all His works, and the world is translucent as a mirror with His beauty. We are passing through one of the greatest crises of all time; the scenes are being shifted for another act in the drama of our history. It is well if we realise even late in the day the true values of life, and the perils of commercial prosperity. Material wealth is not all we need. "Bear one another's burdens" and "set duties above rights" are the precepts we must practise, to lay solid foundations for the world-peace of the future.

LOVE'S TRIUMPH

"EVERY good tree bringeth forth good fruit." These words furnish perhaps the most striking of all the many eloquent and convincing proofs of the supernatural and Divine character of the immortal Church of Christ. Her motherly heart, of infinite expansion, takes in the wide gamut of all human suffering, and her indefatigable and inexhaustible charity has branded her for all time as the work not of man, but of God. The cries of distress of afflicted humanity, resounding through all ages, and wafted on the wings of every breeze, have not reached her sympathetic and compassionate ear in vain. Comfortress of the desolate is a title all her own, which no other society can claim. The nineteen centuries of her chequered existence have not passed over her head without fruits that are imperishable; the prints of her footsteps are visible everywhere. All the arts are impregnated with her heaven-born inspiration. The masterpieces of the poet, the musician and the painter, owe the debt of immortality to their sacred origin, and the fame of Dante, Raphael, and Mozart, are attributable alone to their source in Christianity. The wisdom and equity that pervade our legislation, the respect for true liberty, equality, and fraternity that lies at the root of our social customs, are the fruits of the doctrine which the Carpenter's Son predicated of old in the streets of Judea.

The cuckoo pretensions of our modern philosophers usurp for Reason the rights of Christianity, but the state of the world before the advent of Christ supplies us with an answer that defies contradiction. The doctrine of the Nazarene was a bolt from the blue, a sudden apparition like a comet in the heavens. Broken fragments of truth, gold spangles of the primitive tradition, lay floating here and there in the universal wreckage. In Cicero we read of the "caritas generis humani," or the love of humanity, and the "Homo sum" of Terence breathes a similar sentiment. But sayings such as these are hidden in poems, or heard by a few in the halls of the academies. But from one mouth proceeds both blessing and cursing. The flowers in their gardens are choked up with weeds. Reason alone brought a mingled harvest, and its grandest pronouncements sweep across the centuries with poison and pestilence on its wings. In the same breath were uttered, on children and women, such inhuman judgments as in this our day make the blood run cold. Even Seneca advocated the massacre of infants. The Sermon on the Mount was a Voice that fell from heaven, its accents sounded like an unknown tongue, it announced the arrival of the new reign of love. The law of hate had possessed the world, the forces of disunion had prevailed everywhere. Now a new generation sprang into existence, a greater than Prometheus brought fire from on high.

God alone could affect such a marvellous revolution. A new earth appeared the reverse of the old. The nations contemplated with bated breath the titanic struggle between love and hate, between the

old world and the new. With hate was allied all the strength of Rome and the formidable conspiracy of the passions of men; on the side of love were the refugees of the Catacombs, who disseminated doctrines adverse to human nature. In this great novel conflict of weakness against strength, it was weakness that conquered, it was love that triumphed, for love is greater than all, "Major horum est caritas." The multitudes were astounded at the love of the Christians. Poverty, which the Ancients called a crime and a curse, was lifted into glory by the benediction of Christ, and the cross of the Criminal who bore men's sins proved a mightier power than the eagles of Rome. Such a feat was achieved by no earthly arm. A flame issued forth from the heart of God, and set all at once the whole world on fire. No orator's voice ever spoke to the world in such eloquent accents as the Crib and the Cross. Who, of all the suffering children of men, was rocked in so rude and uncouth a cradle, or subjected to so painful and ignominious a death? Who would venture henceforward to call poverty a disgrace, after Bethlehem and Nazareth had transfigured it into glory, and made it divine for all future time. The example of a God was irresistible for ever.

THE INFINITE LOVE

"YOU have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but the spirit of the adoption of sons, whereby we cry *Abba*, Father." This spirit is the spirit of brotherhood and the grand creation of Christianity. Time was when the spirit that prevailed among men made the prince and the plutocrat build their sumptuous palaces far away from the sight of all human habitations, lest the wearisome cries of the children of misfortune should offend their ears and break in discordantly on their selfish repose. It was here Christianity wrought a marvellous change, that could only be effected by the hand of the Most High. Poverty and suffering, which were hated by men, assumed a fascination that was never created by the charms of youth, the splendours of the universe, and the united enchantments of all earthly beauty. The eloquence of Greece and Rome grew dim, Demosthenes and Cicero seemed but tinkling cymbals, when confronted with those accents of sweetness and power that fell like most exquisite pearls and diamonds from the lips of the Word that created all things, the everlasting Life and the Light of men. No teacher in all the ages of the past had supported His doctrine by such magnificence of example. And this Man of Sorrows, this Crowned King of Grief, was the only Man in the great tide of time that could challenge the world to convince Him of sin.

So the Church in which Christ is incarnate for ever pulsates with the energies of His infinite love and the life that was sacrificed for the sins of the world. She is super-eminently the beneficent mother of mankind, and the grand reflection from age to age of the years He spent while dwelling amongst us, doing good unto all, and binding up the wounds of the bodies and the souls. No orphans are discovered in the shelter of her shrines, for the angels of charity are in hospital and in field, in her schools and her sanctuaries of refuge, surpassing all the loves of sisters and mothers towards the souls entrusted to their tender care. *Abba*, Father, in the Church is no sterile cry, her brotherhood is no empty shadow of a name. She records the fact in deeds of glory, not emblazoned on brass or shining marble, but engraved on the ineffaceable pages of the history of the world. The genealogies of the Egyptians are the fond creations of their childish vanity and fancy, but the blood of Adam, the first parent of our race, cries louder and higher than the pretensions of fable and proclaims unmistakably the common source of all. King and peasant are both of a similar origin, both palace and hut must be levelled in the dust, and the pomp of wealth and the pride of power must all terminate in the narrowness of the grave.

Christianity invented charity among men, for in truth we must say that before Christ came on earth man loved not, nor reverenced his fellow-man. The beauty he worshipped passed quickly away and flatterers fled with the flight of the years. The flower soon faded with time's killing frost, for as Homer said of old, "the generations of men are like

those of the leaves," and love soon begotten soon sank and died. The picture of the pagan has no potent spell, and presents small attraction to the careful student. All shapes of ugliness possessed his heart. Ambition, voluptuousness, cruelty, and hate were rivals for the vile supremacy of his soul. Egotism, in all its most repulsive forms, was the god who received all the incense of his homage. Superabundance failed to produce satiety, and only augmented and intensified his greed. The fortunes of the rich swelled the miseries of the poor. It was time for a God of charity and love to reveal His infinite goodness to men.

THE MYSTERY OF LOVE

OF all the channels of grace instituted by Christ the Holy Eucharist is the most powerful and most productive of great and permanent results. The history of all God's operations outside Himself was a gradually descending scale, a mystic ladder of steps approaching nearer and nearer unto man; while the history of man, in turn, was a series of efforts to find out a God whom he had lost, and a paradise of which he had been forcibly despoiled. The Holy Eucharist was a final link of the golden chain that had brought God and man together, and exhausted the treasure-house of God's Infinite love. God glassed Himself at first in the works of His creation, and conversed with Adam in the garden of delights. He spoke unto Moses in the burning bush. To the chosen people in their wanderings through the desert He was a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. He dwelt in the mysterious cloud of the temple, and, when in exile the Israelites sat down by the rivers of Babylon, the sacred writer tells us how they wept when they remembered Sion. The idolatry of the pagans and the Pantheism of our day show the longing of mankind to be united with God. The Greeks paid Him homage in Zeus and the Romans in the person of Jupiter; the Chaldeans beheld Him in the great god of day and at night in the splendour of the starlit sky. So great was their need of His visible presence, that they multiplied their divinities

in wood and stone, and turned tyrants and monsters like Tiberius and Caligula into gods; while the world still witnessed their abominations and crimes. A great Roman orator informs us of man's notion, in his day, that he formerly had held concourse with God and sprang from a family that belonged to Heaven.

But the day dawned at last when the shadows disappeared and the great King of Glory came and dwelt among men. Thrice blessed the sun that illumined His face, the zephyrs that fanned His cheek, and the dust that was consecrated by His sacred tread! He was born in a stable, lived a carpenter's son, and died for our love on the wood of the cross. He assumed human nature with all our infirmities, and resembled us in all except sin.

But the love of a God admits no limitation. He would do for each one what he did for our nature in the marvellous prodigy of His Incarnation. He who generously provided us with food for our bodies would give us the heavenly food for the wants of the soul, His own Body and Blood, His Soul and Divinity, to transfuse into us His immortal life and enable us truly to say with St. Paul: "I live, not I, but Christ lives in me."

The tradition of belief in the Sacrament of Love like a tidal wave rolls in from all ages on the shore of time. The poet, the doctor, the architect, and the soldier, the martyr, the penitent, and the virgin, all testify unanimously to its mighty power. Great miracles have confirmed at times the truth of His Eucharistic presence. In the reign of St. Louis all Paris saw the Host take the form of a Lamb, and in

1608 some ten thousand people saw the monstrance with the Blessed Sacrament, in the conflagration of the Abbey of Faverney, miraculously suspended in the air, intact, amid a heap of charred ruins lying all around. A stream ever flowed from the Sacred Heart in the Tabernacle of His love, which fertilised all the spiritual world, and poured joy and consolation on all parts of creation. The great King of Love seemed seated on a throne whence He scattered His largesse among the children of men.

Three centuries He lay hid in the galleries of the Catacombs in spite of thirty edicts and millions of armed men.

Thousands of executioners could not stop the great Sacrifice that was offered on hidden altars. The fury of barbarians and the fanaticism of the followers of Mahomet, the hatred of the Reformers, the satanic hate of the philosophers, and the frenzy of the Revolution, all the forces in fine of perverted genius and violence left it standing still, when almost everything else had been swept remorselessly away. It penetrated into all the habitable regions of the earth, it climbed over mountains and descended into valleys. The Mass was celebrated on ships in mid-ocean and in the presence of armies, in the Isles of the Pacific, in China and Japan, in Jerusalem, Babylon, Nineveh and Constantinople, Geneva, Paris, London, New York, India, and Thibet; and everywhere it was the unfailing principle of light, the radiator of heat, and the source of all spiritual fecundity. Like a daily Redemption it inspired heroic deeds, like a spiritual sun its centripetal force attracted the whole world and prevented it from falling into chaos.

THE RIVER OF LOVE

GOODNESS is the essence of the nature of the Eternal, and the fertile fountain of His marvellous and multitudinous operations. All holiness without goodness is empty and void. It originates all joy in Heaven and on earth. It has ever been the source of all civilisation. Liberty and equality without it are illusions, and all fraternity a mere shadow of a name. It reconciles equality with the hierarchy of nature, it constitutes the liberty of the children of God, and inspires and establishes all genuine fraternity. It is deeply imbedded in all Christian institutions, it illumines with radiance dark periods of our history, it spans like a rainbow the cloudiest skies, and appears in epochs of chaos and confusion like an angel of consolation in the fury of the storm. It is goodness that cherishes the golden ideal like a dream of enchantment or a second Eden, such as poets had dreamt of the Saturnian reign, when wars and strife would be memories only, when munitions would cower in the corners of museums and be gazed on with feelings of pity and commiseration as monuments of the folly and frenzy of our fathers. These imaginings alas! were ironically rendered in the orgies and bloodshed of the French Revolution.

The brotherhood of nature is a rare oasis in the desolate desert of existence. Achilles and Patroclus and Nisus and Euryalus are but silver linings in the

cloud of antiquity. Fraternity has no place in the culture of Athens, and its name was unknown to the citizens of Rome. From Abel to the Redeemer flowed a river of blood, the brand of Cain was on all the generations. Since Christ, the river flowed on as before, but the stream that fed it was the martyrs' blood.

The monstrous massacres by the Turks in Armenia prove what men may accomplish when untouched by the sacred transfiguration of the Cross. The Pentecostal fires could alone inflame the cold stony nature of the heart of man. But Christian charity bridged every abyss, climbed up to the summit of every mountain, and crossed triumphant over every sea. Egotism had sacrificed all to itself, charity sacrificed itself to all. The egotist fancied all the world was his own. He ignored that the stars had their limited orbit, that the solar system is the satellite of another. The egotist plays false in the universal concert. If science be his study, he would shrivel up unmoved the whole Temple of Truth to build a reputation on its smouldering ruins. If perchance he worships at the shrine of art, he would drag without scruple his wings in the mire, in idolatrous homage to the golden calf.

The egotist king of commerce and industry will raise his great pile on tears and bruised hearts, whose labours made possible his colossal fortune. The egotist ruler chokes merit and worth and promotes the unworthy intriguers and incompetents to swell the vile circle of his fawning flatterers. Egotism is a spider that weaves its web in strange and unexpected places. It is merciless as a tiger, and

enveloping and all-absorbing as the boa constrictor which devours remorselessly its unfortunate victims. Christianity alone can overcome its wiles; when Christ lives in us, the Ego is dead. Egotism dries and locks up the heart. But the Heart of Jesus is a mighty reservoir, whence rivers of charity are poured over the world. The Church, the mother of incomparable love, who continues the life of her Bridegroom on earth, in her Sisters of the Poor, of Charity, and of Refuge, places aged and orphans, the deaf and the dumb, the blind, the epileptic, the cripple and the leper, and all the poor pariahs of civilisation underneath the kind shelter of her maternal wing, and while nursing their bodies with tenderest care, watches over as well the necessities of their souls, thus filling their hearts with bliss upon earth, and opening up before them the grand prospects of eternity.

THE POWER OF LOVE

As God has glassed Himself in all His works, so His charity is reflected in all creation. The marches of triumphant armies had their glory tarnished by the evils that accompanied them. Their victorious standards were soiled by the blood of the slain, and the wounded and the dead, in a sad cortège, seemed to follow for ever in their melancholy train. But the conquests of love were unstained by a tear, for its power was superior to the sword, and its magical attraction had no obstacle on earth to impede its onward and irresistible progress. All earthly love was a transitory joy like a momentary flash in the heart of a cloud. But the love of God was both infinite and eternal. He gave His gifts to the patriarchs, poured out His secrets of the future to the prophets, and when the time that was appointed was accomplished He surrendered up Himself to the creature of His hands. By a mystic ladder He climbed step by step in the stages of His union with man. "Ascensiones in corde suo disposuit." Creation, Incarnation, and Transubstantiation were the stupendous mysteries that tracked His progress towards the consummation of His purpose. From the crib to the cross He exhibited His love, till He reached at last the limit of His power.

A love like His was not destined to be sterile. No artist ever hung with such rapture over his ideal as

His Mystic Spouse over every phase of His existence. For 2,000 years she had made the annual round from Nazareth to Calvary, from the Passion to the Ascension. She contemplated in the ecstasy of her grief the thorn-crowned head of her Beloved, the nails that pierced His sacred hands and feet, and the spear that transfixed His loving Heart. The faith in His Resurrection sent a shaft of light through the darkness of the Catacombs. His Cross was an inspiration in the halcyon days of Constantine, and hurled the armies of the Crusaders on Jerusalem to recover the sacred treasure of the sepulchre. What shattered hopes, what internal conflicts, what tears of the heart, what battles unseen by the eyes of men have been offered Him by holy souls as holocausts of their love! What saints have sprung up like a rich harvest in every soil to reproduce for all time the glories of His virtues! The tiara of the Papacy, the mitre of the episcopate, the crown of the priesthood prove the truth of the promise "I shall be with you all days to the consummation of the world." His name is like a zephyr from the fields of paradise and like heavenly music to the ears of the dying. All other doctrines have been barren of results. Even Greece herself, the fair queen of culture, the classic soil that brought forth Homer, and Hesiod, Demosthenes and Plato, was unable to make any converts to their creed. A wall of China isolated her from the world. By the scimitar only did Mahomet inculcate the Koran to his followers. The land that had echoed to the accents of St. Chrysostom was fruitless in her labours from the moment she abandoned her mother and adopted the vile arm of persecution to propagate her

schism. In England it is less than a century ago that O'Connell, the great Irish tribune, snatched Catholic Emancipation from a reluctant senate, and burst asunder the ignominious chains of religious slavery that had bowed down the Empire for 300 years.

But the arms of force can achieve only imaginary conquests. It is love alone that can sing of victory; its sympathy extends to the body as well as to the soul; for the body is the greatest of God's material works. It was assumed by God in the mystery of the Incarnation, it was transfigured in glory on the mountain of Tabor, and it is joined with the Divine Nature that is throned for ever in splendour, at the right hand of God. The Saviour healed the bodies as well as the souls of men, and the Church after His example meets every want of a suffering humanity and uses all means to obtain its end. It ventilates its wishes in the pages of the Press, for the Press is a mighty auxiliary of the pulpit, and indifference to its use will abandon it to the enemy who knows too well the influence it wields. As well might we scorn to use steam and electricity that impart such benefits to man and lend such aid to the cause of progress. Love sees in man the image of God and not a mere senseless wheel in the machinery of our workshops. He must have a share of the air of heaven and have leisure to behold in the glory of the sun the creative hand of God.

True brotherhood is the creation of Christ. We are all of the family of Adam. One law should exist for the children of our Father. The majority of men have not been created to feed on the luxuries and

pamper to the pride and vanity of the few. Slavery, in whatever form, is no product of Christianity. The use of wealth is to minister to poverty and distress and not to the mere maintenance of high rank and station. Charity alone is philanthropy, and the fertile mother of all true reforms. The republic of Christ has no limit but the world. It has wrestled with and conquered all the miseries of life. The schools of unbelief only strangle true fraternity, but the labours of Christianity for the happiness of mankind have been crowned with success and shine resplendent over the grave of mere human attempts to ameliorate the conditions of our race.

CELESTIAL HARMONIES

EACH human soul is a harp making music to the touch of the Master whose nature is the source and Infinite Creator of the varied expressions of all earthly harmony. The saints in particular are the echoes on earth of the music that gladdens the ears of the Blessed. Each saint is a wave of the celestial ocean that beats for evermore on the shore of eternity. Unity in variety is the universal law that governs beauty in the Creator and His work. Sin is the enemy and discordant note that broke up and shattered the eternal design. Celestial strains still survive in and haunt the beautiful lives of the good upon earth. With eyes ever fixed on the everlasting hills, they are disenchanted from sounds of the world. Their hearts and conversation are not here below; their feet are on earth, but their thoughts are in Heaven.

The grand apparition of the Eternal Word to the wearied and tear-dimmed eyes of men was the greatest spectacle that was ever witnessed in any of the regions of our fallen earth. Angels came from Heaven to announce the great joy, and the tidings soon spread to all tribes and nations. The hearing of the Word was the prelude to grace, the commencement of merit, and the seed of glory. The fruit of the Virginal womb still lives in the Word Incarnated in the Church of Christ.

The anniversary of God's Incarnation is dimmed by the shadow of a passing cloud. The world is enveloped in the dark robes of mourning. The chalice of the Saviour is presented to our lips, but the *fiat* He uttered sounds harsh to our ears. "Thy will be done" are words hard to repeat. The forgiveness is difficult of vindictiveness and hate. But the words on the Cross are a lamp for our feet and a balm to the wounds and bruises of the heart. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do": these words are a tower of strength and courage to the weak. The day will come when the crooked will be straightened and the tears shall be wiped from the eyes that have wept. Bethlehem and Nazareth are stars shedding radiance. What song is so sweet as the words of the promise that "eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard, nor hath human heart ever dreamt or imagined the joys God reserves for the children of His love"? The Alpha and the Omega becomes our Immanuel, realising the prophecies and pointing us to Heaven. His life is a salutary warning to the rich and a mine of consolation to the suffering and the poor. He ordains the masters to be servants of all. Kings and princes are bound to regard their subjects as treasures of worth entrusted to their care, whom Providence wills to be jealously guarded, and not to be wasted in criminal prodigality, for mere proud, ambitious, or selfish aims. Domination and wealth are too dearly purchased by the sacrifice of millions of human lives. The life and career of the meanest of mortals far outweighs in value in the eyes of the Creator all earthly distinctions of vanity and pride, all pomp, cere-

monial, and idle show that cloak too often the absence of merit, and are empty substitutes for the want of virtue. Some men build up during all their lives, while others exist only to destroy. They extinguish all they should save and protect, and prosper only by the ruins they have made. The egotist spreads desolation in hearts that God predestined should be flooded with joy. The sun that chases the shadows of the night is the poorest image of the Eternal Sun, enshrouded in our flesh as in the veil of His love; the perfect Adam foreshadowed by the first, and the mystic mantle that makes perfect the saints. He is also the vine of which we are the branches. The immortal Church is born of His death; the Spouse, like the Mother, is the reflex of His life. His poverty puts avarice to ignominious flight, and lifts up and cheers the heart of the poor. The road to Heaven is not strewn with roses: thorns and rough stones are met with all the way. But the days of suffering and of toil have an end, the battle of life soon comes to a close, and the crown of glory of the victors is eternal.

PILGRIMS OF THE NIGHT

A TRANSIENT gleam of glory and of triumph breaks in on our Saviour's pathway on Palm Sunday morning. It is like an aftermath of the splendour of Thabor and an echo of the Gloria in Excelsis of the angels. It is also a foretaste of the King's resurrection and His grand transportation in the chariot of the clouds to the infinite magnificence of His Father's Home. He still has to tread the dark valley of humiliation, the sharp crown of thorns must be pressed on His brow, the scourges must tear His tender flesh, and the cross must be laid on His lacerated shoulder; but the sun will burst through the Passion cloud, the stone of the sepulchre will be rolled away, and the Easter dawn will scatter the darkness and exhibit to the world a deserted grave. Then the sceptre of death will rule over Him no longer, He will rise from the tomb to die no more. The print of the nails will be still impressed on His sacred Feet and His adorable Hands, and the gash of the spear still gaping in His Side, but such rays of brilliance will stream from the wounds, as will add new effulgence to the Kingdom of Light. Our mortal bodies that imprison the soul shall be made like to His in the glory of the Resurrection.

Even now, we no more must be called His servants, we are truly His heirs and adopted sons. Our hearts are the altars of His terrestrial home, and our bodies

the temple where He loves to dwell. The use of the talents God gives unto men is the means they receive to work out their salvation. To neglect or obstruct them in their beneficent action is to thwart sacrilegiously the purposes of God. They are germs planted in us by the husbandmen of Heaven, and in due time the Master will require the harvest. Life has been given us to cultivate the soil; we may sow in tears, but to reap in joy. We may weep for awhile by the rivers of Babylon, and hang up our harps on the walls of our exile, but the soul that possesses the King of kings cannot harbour the spirit of sadness and gloom. There is One who can open refreshing rills in the sands of the dullest and dreariest lives, and in cheerless and loneliest places compensate us, if we live in spirit with the saints and the angels who dwell in the tabernacles of eternal rest. The world that surrounds us is living without God; education is forming only bodies, not souls. The Moloch of war casts a lurid searchlight on the values of these methods in the eyes of God. Vast hecatombs of lives and accumulations of wealth are engulfed in a day in the fiery abyss. Education without religion is the fertile source of the misery and desolation we are suffering from to-day. The pampered, so-called "culture" of the German has revealed to the world a useful lesson, if only we are willing to profit by experience. We cannot live without God in the world. Christianity and civilisation have ever been united: "What God has joined together let no man put asunder." Christianity can never be ousted out of sight. Like the towering dome of some noble minster, it greets our gaze upon every side. The

moral law is the sap of civilisation and the prop and stay of the nations of the earth. Above all the din of the city and the crowd, may this lesson reach our ears and sink into our souls. But pride and ambition and earthly pleasures are noises that shut out the harmonies of heaven, and enslave us to the worship of life's passing show. Humility gives wings for the highest flights; the Publican, not the Pharisee, comes close unto God. Innocence and repentance form the two-edged sword that carves the way to the Eternal City. Peter and John are the royal sign-posts that guide in safety the pilgrims of the night. High-minded, egotistic, and all-absorbing spirits have no companionship with the doctrine of the Gospel. We are compassed all round by the love of the Creator. It is love of God that opens all locks and reveals the secrets of eternal things. The Infinite Love cannot gainsay Himself. He who gave us His Son cannot give us more. In life's darkest hours there are breakings of the light. Though fallen, the world has not lost all its beauty; the architect's finger-prints cling to it still. The mountains in their majesty seem to lift us to Heaven; the skies, star-enamelled in shining squadrons, remind us of the cohorts of the celestial armies; the outspread expanses of the ocean-floor, reposing like a giant in solemn slumber, or frothing and foaming in the fury of the storm, the profound recesses of the forest wilds enwrapt in the folds of the silent night, or bathed in the glory of the noon-day sun, the teeming fertility of kind mother nature and its sumptuous opulence of fruit and of flower, bear witness in language which cannot be mistaken of the power and wisdom and

beauty of God. He triumphs still in the ruins sin has made, in the marvellous and immeasurable works of His Hands. Yet these are vain and empty shadows, only partial always and incomplete, of the beauty of the world of eternal love, where the thrones left vacant by the fallen angels are being gradually filled by the palm-bearing victors, who have fought out the battle of life with success, and issued triumphant from the deadly strife.

FAITH AND REASON

ALL the works of God are established in harmony, and reflect, in their measure, that unity in variety which is the essence of His eternal and unchangeable being. The close interdependence of all parts of the universe, of the intellectual, physical, and moral worlds, of the natural and supernatural, the visible and the invisible, grows clearer and stronger from day to day, and as study and observation become deeper and more extensive that marvellous simplicity which is rooted in all nature stands out in bolder and more conspicuous light. Thus reason and faith, when duly considered, are rivulets flowing from the one source of truth, and while reason may be looked on as the twilight of the mind, faith intensifies its light with the illuminations of grace, and places, as it were, the coping-stone on the temple of knowledge. The sun is one, but its irradiations are many. Faith and reason are strings of one heavenly lyre, whence God draws perpetual songs of harmony. When reason, in the pride and arrogance of self-sufficiency, refuses the potent auxiliary of faith, she shuts herself up in a darksome dungeon, rejecting the hand that would guide her in the dark and the pilot that would steer her over mine-strewn seas. For faith leaps the barriers that block reason's progress, and bestows on her the wings that waft her to the stars. She opens to her gaze worlds she never could have reached.

Yet reason is the road and foundation of faith and the porch of the palace of supernatural truth. Hence the Church guards jealously both nature and grace, and protects all the rights of faith and reason. Reason must not monopolise the empire of truth, conspiring like Lucifer to usurp God's throne. On the other hand, the mist-shrouded summits of our faith must borrow from reason the light of the evidences which lead us to the truth. The sublimest of philosophies seeks the aid of theology; it realises the folly of ignoring the light from Heaven, and of isolating the mind from its divine domain.

Faith and reason are married in indissoluble union, as the human and divine are wedded in the Word. Christ, it is written, is not divided. He is all in all. He is Truth and Light. All things are from Him. He bridges the abyss to link us to the Divine. His human nature is a ladder to Heaven. Absolute independence, intellectual and moral, is the idol that is worshipped most widely in our day. Yet nature is necessarily subject to rule. There is tyranny in the air we breathe, atmospheric conditions rule the aeronaut in his flight. The locomotive engine that whirls us so swiftly through space is enchained by the tracks that secure its motion. The river of abundance is bound by its banks; when it overflows it spreads havoc and ruin. The stars of heaven do not wander at will, but are closely confined to their appointed orbits. Submission to revelation is the prompting of reason. Our obedience is, then, not to man but to God.

THE JOYS OF HEAVEN

BELIEF in a future world is a doctrine that has weathered all the storms of infidelity. Though shining with a bolder and a clearer light since the advent of Christianity, yet the noblest representatives of genius and antiquity—men like Socrates, Aristotle, and Cicero—regarded immortality as an inalienable possession and a natural development of the higher aspirations of men. Job and the Machabees hailed its vision from afar. He who called Himself God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob declared at the same time he was God of the living. He would lose none of those whom His Father had given Him, but would raise them to Himself at the final day. St. Paul in his turn said that man's resurrection was inseparably bound up with the Resurrection of Christ, who would renovate our body after the fashion of His own, and transform into incorruptible what was sown in corruption.

The universal yearning and sigh after immortality was the passionate cry of our unsatisfied nature which God our Creator could not have given us in vain. The Pagan heaven was an earthly festival from which God, our true recompense, was always absent. The paradise of Cicero was a colloquy with Cato. Kings, philosophers, and heroes alone were admitted, while the poor and the slaves were always excluded. Still, passing gleams on earth—the gold and purple of the

dawning day, the magnificent pageantry of the sinking sun, the succession of the day to the darkness of the night and night's own cortège of the moon and stars, the resurrection of nature from winter's long slumber, the new birth of the flowers, and the verdant fields, the trees wrapped anew in their mantles of green—formed perpetual evolutions which were symbols of our destiny. The invisible is imprinted on the visible creation, and supernatural truths can be gleaned from nature. The stars are restricted in their journeys through space and suffer no repose in their circuit round the sun. Like ships they sail around, islands of light, whole fleets touring in the oceans of space. Has not God placed His tabernacle in the palace of the sun? And is Mary not crowned with the splendour of the stars? There are scenes upon earth which we love to revisit, and landscapes of beauty we love to recall. Grand and majestical are the panoramas of the Alps. How sublime is the temple of St. Peter's in Rome! What delight we experience in a masterpiece of genius, of an orator, a poet, a painter, or musician, who have left us those works that are joys for ever and imperishable legacies of wealth to mankind. But all these are passing and fragmentary pleasures. They are droppings on earth from the rivers of Heaven. The mind wants more light, the heart more repose.

Sharp thorns overgrow all the roses of life. We are strangers to those who have gone before us; we know not all those who will follow after; we know but a portion of those of our day. But in Heaven we shall know all and love all in God. The past, the present, and the future will be ours. We shall fathom

all the deepest mysteries of our faith and the secrets of the interminable spaces of creation. All pleasures of the intelligence and the heart will be there, and our spiritualised senses will be gratified in full beyond all the dreams of imagination and fancy. We shall see face to face the great Source of all goodness, and beauty, and truth. Enraptured by the harmony of angelic choirs, all tears shall be wiped by the Father from our eyes and the vision of God in the light of glory will fill us with an ecstasy of everlasting joy.

THE VISION SPLENDID

TWO parallel rivers of the generations of mankind flowed down side by side through the valley of time, from the fountain and primitive source of creation. The good and the evil existed in all ages of whom Cain and Abel were the types and progenitors. Their predestined place on the right and the left is their marked-out destiny on the Judgment Day. On the right will be ranged the Sons of God who marred not by sin the image of their Maker, who through all the vicissitudes and shadows of life's pilgrimage caught glimpses of the glory of the Eternal Dawn, outlines though dim of the splendours behind the veil, fore-shadowings of the future realities of the Resurrection. For them the Redeemer was ever at their side, the Healer of all wounds, the Consoler of all woes, the Friend who clung closer than brother or sister, and surpassed in tenderness a fond mother's love. For them our Lord's name was sweeter than honey or the exquisite symphonies of the masters of song. For them He was no idle fable or abstraction; they loved Him not only in word but in deed, with the homage of the mind and affections of the heart. They found in the Gospel a moral discipline which outstripped all the feeble governments of men. The refinement and polish of Athenian culture and the keen sense of justice of the Roman legislation seems weak and imperfect when compared with its teach-

ings. The hands that were pierced encompassed them all in the Old Dispensation as well as the New, for no power can circumscribe the radiation of God's love. His sunshine and rain fall on every soil; the Divine inspirations are addressed to all time. The saints from Abel were saved by the Cross. The Lamb was immolated from the commencement of the world. Like the waters of the sea is His all-encircling love. It stands by the bed of sorrow and the graves of our lamented dead. It illumines with hope the most clouded sky. The Just beheld in the material world no mere empty pageant or passing show. The lasting city was reflected in all. Strangers and sojourners in this valley of tears, they saw in the visible scenes of life the images of the invisible and eternal.

With this river of crystal that comes down from Abel flows the turbulent torrent that descends from Cain. These were the men who lived for the senses. All else was for them a hollow phantom.

The horizons of eternity were shut out from their gaze. The heavens that proclaim the glory of God and reveal the imprinted footsteps of the Maker were hidden from their eyes by an impenetrable veil. They were deaf to the myriad voices of creation. They were blind to the truths of which the Sacraments were the signs. They perceived not the presence of the King behind the screen. All the earthly preludes to the harmonies of heaven fell on unresponsive and unsympathetic ears. They never laid hold of the mystery of God's love, or our marvellous participation of God's nature by grace. They failed to realise that the heart of man is a mighty

abyss, which omnipotent goodness alone can fill. God alone is the recompense that can satisfy our souls. Our bodies even here are the temples of the Spirit. Let "Excelsior," then, be our constant cry. From brightness to brightness let us mount up to God, and climb step by step up the mystic stair. Let high ideals be our perpetual aim, how often soever we may stumble on the way. Let us dwell in the happy communion of the saints. Let us fix our eyes on our final home, on the crown of justice, the golden throne, and the palm of triumph for victories won. Let us strangle in our hearts the Moloch of Mammon, and jealousy and envy, the destroyers of good deeds. Let us crush all malignant affections of the soul, and extinguish the swellings of resentment and pride. May God give us strength to fight to the end. The stream of life runs swiftly on. The Way of the Cross is the way to bliss, to the kingdom where dwell all the children of God. The Alpha and Omega will be there unveiled. All the Angels and Archangels, the Cherubim and Seraphim, will be visible to the gladdened eye of the elect. There we shall meet those who preceded us to their rest. By the light of glory we shall be made like to God. Face to Face we shall see Him as He is. We shall bask in the sunlight of His infinite beauty, and partake of His cloudless and everlasting joy.

SURSUM CORDA

HOLY Mother Church in the octave of the Ascension keeps the eyes of her children ever fixed on heaven. "Sursum Corda," "lift your hearts," is her rallying cry. Like the Promised Land to the Israelites of the desert is the thought of Paradise to the exiles upon earth. Both body and soul take part in the combat, both body and soul shall receive the prize. The body it is that is torn by the tyrant, and grows faint and weary with fasting and prayer. The mouth chants the anthems of worship and praise, and discourses in accents becoming the saints. The ears ever close against worldly converse and delight in hearing of things that are holy. The eyes turn away from pictures unholy and delight in those only that are pointed to heaven. The hands scatter alms in abundance to the poor, and the feet walk in paths of righteousness and peace. Both body and soul are tossed in life's storm, both stand side by side in the struggle and strife. Divided often in the conflicts of time, the harmony broken at moments by sin will be there completely and wholly restored, and the body, transfigured and spiritualised by God, will be tuned to the soul in most beautiful concord. Our soul it is true leaves the body for a while, but rejoins it soon after, when the Maker has refashioned and refitted it for eternity. How shallow and empty seems all earthly society when compared with the

social magnificence of Heaven, where virtue alone is reputed as rank and all things are judged by the standards of Christ. The rich will be there who fulfilled their true task as stewards administering the property of God and dispensers in the economy of charity and love, to whom Lazarus and Dives have not spoken in vain, and who scorned to grow rich on the slavery of the poor. Alexanders and Cæsars will not dominate any more, but the Marys and the Magdalens will possess the thrones. The best and the noblest representatives of our race, who achieved the grand triumph of the conquest of themselves, will be gathered all together in the commonwealth of God. The most exquisite flowers of every virtue will be planted in its soil, but the rose of charity will shine over all. Poverty and suffering are the priceless pearls most prized by God, who came down to seek them and found them on earth, in the stable of Bethlehem, and on Calvary's Cross. Young maidens like Agnes and Agatha will be crowned with a double aureola of the Virgin and the Martyr. Apostles like St. Paul and St. Patrick will be cinctured by thousands their labours have brought into the fold. The champions of the faith in all ages of the Church will be crowned with a splendour peculiarly their own, and more recent saints like the venerable Libermann and the Little Flower will illustrate the immortal fecundity of the Church, in producing new blooms of sanctity in her soil. The mutual contemplation and admiration of the elect will multiply and intensify the heaven of their joy, and their charity will take all in a universal embrace. Star will differ from star in the Kingdom of Light,

and the places left vacant by the angels who fell will be filled in proportion to the merits of each. But all, without exception, like crystalline wells, will reflect the inexhaustible happiness of God. The monotony and ennui we experience in life will be banished for ever from the lives of the saints. In a land of perpetual and unending progress new horizons of loveliness will be opening up for ever, new scenes of enchantment and transcendent beauty. Sleep, the brother of Death, never closes the eyes that are riveted without ceasing on the vision of God. The charms of all ages, the fascinations of all seasons, will be summed up together in the joys of the elect. Those bodies that on earth clog the movements of the soul will be swifter in their flight than the lightning flash. No wall of granite can obstruct their path, no Alpine summit arrest their progress. All the mighty and innumerable hosts of space can be visited and explored in the twinkling of an eye, manifesting for ever new marvellous revelations of the power and the goodness of God. When the butterfly, bursting its bonds of clay and casting the tenements of its long captivity, mounts high into the air and mingles with the sun, then dives in the honey-laden goblets of the flowers, there is acted before us the great drama of our destiny. One day, in like manner, we shall break through our barriers, and, mounting to our Kingdom in the Heaven of heavens, we shall feast for ever with the angels and saints at the sumptuous board of the Eternal.

THE HOUSE OF OUR ETERNITY

ON the Feast of the Ascension, the curtain rises on the final act of the drama of the Redemption, and reveals to us in the opening of the eternal gates the triumphal entry of the Conqueror to His Kingdom. He entrusts to His Apostles the great mission of the Church, to preach the Gospel to every creature and to conquer in turn by the power of His Word. With this arm of might they should master Rome, and with Rome all the world subjected to her sway. Let us mingle in spirit with Mary and the disciples as they wend their way overflowing with joy from the mountain of Olivet, whence He rose to His Home.

It is our home also. Let us lift up our hearts, for He goes before us to prepare us a place: our exile like His will not last for ever; His Ascension is ours. Our humanity is with Him already and reigns as the King of Angels and men. He created us for Himself to be with Him for ever. The Paradise of the Blessed is the vision of God in the first-born palace of His creative power. There we shall all behold Him as He is, gazing with the angels on His beautiful face, and possessing in perfection, all at once and for ever, the fullest completeness of peace and joy. All the starry systems of immeasurable space keep always revolving towards a common centre. Nought that God by His power has brought into being but is destined to live and endure for all time. In due

course all the world will grow old as a vestment, and the form of all created things will be changed by fire.

All material creation will be freed from bondage and transfigured in beauty, like its Maker and King. The motion of the stars will come to a close when they reach the rendezvous of their eternal haven. From death to life is the universal law. The consummation will come when time shall be no more, and all things that be, like poor wearied wanderers, or exhausted armies trophy-ladened from the fight, will sink down to rest at the feet of the Creator. The world that is now is but a rough sketch of the house of our eternity. The poet and the painter have attempted in vain to give us an adequate idea of its beauty, for "eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God has prepared for those that love Him." How powerful in its helplessness, how eloquent in its silence is this negative portrait of the inspired writer! The airiest dream of bright childhood's fancies; the fair full-orbed moon that flings fairy enchantment over mountains and valleys and deep forest shades, flooding all the world with its argent splendour; the rivers that mock with reflected glories, and send back to heaven its iridescent hues; the zephyr's odour—laden of the gardens of earth; the arrows of light that transfuse with radiance all the myriad dimples of translucent ocean; the nocturnal pageantry of the sentinels of the sky; the sublimest creations of melody and harmony; all the keenest enjoyments that the heart has ever known, are but chaos and discord and foolish delusion, compared with the flawless joys of the elect. Kings upon thrones with imperishable

crowns, they shall share in the empire of the eternal. The participation of God's nature by grace will be crowned and consummated in the light of glory. All times, all places, all persons will be seen, all events of history will be present before them, with the links of creation's ascending scale. Their deification will reach its zenith. All the chambers of the kingdom of knowledge will be open before them, all the greatest achievements of the masters of mind will seem dull and imperfect guesses at the truth.

The sphinx-mask of Nature, which genius never lifted, will at length be removed from her shaded face. Our eyes undazzled shall fix like eagles' the light of the Eternal Sun. Our hunger for God shall be sated and our thirst be quenched at the everlasting fount. Life's fretful fever will be stilled at last, and death and heartache will exist no longer. Our pursuit of knowledge is hard labour at best, a mere harvest of the past; and when all is summed up, a poor, paltry store. Men's minds are most turned in the channels of destruction. The happiness of mankind and the claims of justice are thoughts and ambitions that lie beyond their sphere. Mere outward distinction is all they crave. The scales of justice are unevenly balanced. Merits despised cry in vain for acknowledgment. In the mad race for wealth and the shadows of station, true worth is ignored and stampeded in the strife.

The hollow ceremonial of deluded majesty, the vain show of earthly pomp of apparel, artificial distinctions of nations and of men, the tendency of legislation to enrich more the rich and impoverish more the poor, the forgetfulness in fine of the Creator

and Preserver on whom all things depend, have compelled Him, though reluctantly, to exhibit His sovereignty and assert His sway in the mighty Armageddon that afflicts the nations. In heaven usurped justice will resume her throne, the oppressed and persecuted will inherit their rights, and the prayer of the Redeemer will be fully accomplished, where all will be one as the Trinity is one, in the indissoluble unity of the Divine Substance.

HEIRS OF INHERITANCE

A LIFE of prayer, of communing with God, is the sure and the solid path to our inheritance. Mere external activities withdraw us from ourselves, and absorb us exclusively in the world of sight. They taint too often the spirit of our worship, and blunt the keen edge of our supernatural sense. Prayer is a gift that comes from God. "I will pour out," said the Prophet, "on the house of David the spirit of grace and of supplication." Prayer, like the smoke of the perfumed incense, that curls up in waves from the golden censers, ascends from pure hearts with agreeable odour till it reaches the exalted throne of the Most High. Hours spent in the shallow distractions of society, or wasted in idle or foolish gossip, must be one day redeemed, for our life is short, and the night comes when no man can work any longer. To have no time for prayer is to have none for our salvation. Vigils were formerly words with a meaning. They were times consecrated to watch and to pray—when the stones of our churches were worn by knees that were bended in prayer, when in early morning, at the first blush of dawn, and in the long, silent watches of cold wintry nights, the prayers of the faithful mounted up to Heaven, never ceasing the canticle of perpetual praise. All soulless mutterings and mechanical utterances are communings devoid of all meaning and merit, and unworthy of

address to the King of kings. Forgiveness is essential to the heirs of the inheritance. God's conduct towards us is the model of our own. We must love Him as He loved, and our neighbours as ourselves. Forgive us our trespasses as we do our trespassers, is the prayer that was taught us by the lips of Our Lord. Yet how many wish the Judge to take them at their word? But He is no tyrant to trample on the weak, and stifle the flame of the flickering flax. His desire is to shield us from the pelting storm, and be to us also as a leaning rock in the sultry heats of the summer sun. He invites all who toil and are heavily laden to take refuge in His heart for peace and for rest. His yoke, He assures us, is sweet and easy, and His burden is pleasant to carry and light. He is still the friend of the publican and sinner, the same who loved the Magdalen of old, that kissed His feet and washed them with her tears, and wiped them in the wealth of her golden hair. No sinners are shut out from the kingdom of God's love. The title of Good Shepherd is His predilection. The walls of the catacombs are witnesses to its hold on the hearts of the Christians who sealed it in their blood. He passed through death's portals to give life to all men, that none within the bounds of His wide creation can be lost, but by positive determination of their will. The Ark of the Church is visible to all eyes, and the unity of that faith which belongs to her alone. All religions outside her, of mere human origin, have been tossed to and fro on the crest of every wave. She stands unique in majestic isolation, unchanged and unchangeable like her Heavenly Head. In perpetual combat with the forces of false-

hood, she emerges unscathed from the endless strife. The Shepherd of our souls is no abstract being, but a living, Divine, ever-acting Personality, whose nature is infinite in power and in love. Even trials and tribulations prove His providential care, and poverty and privation are but blessings in disguise. How superficial at times is our reading of God's Word? If we only admit Him, He has promised to sup with us, and to make of our bodies the temples of His Spirit. If we walk by His side on the thorn-strewn path we shall share even now in the joys of His triumphs. Our hearts will exult in the glorious march of His Mystic Spouse from generation to generation, ever casting away from her maternal bosom all heresies and schisms and multitudinous errors, extending her conquests over lands and seas and reaching from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The promised inheritance was the golden prospect that created the army of saints and martyrs. By faith they beheld the Promised Land. But the brightest of visions that ever was seen by the fascinated eyes of prophet or of saint is naught but the densest darkness and obscurity contrasted with the brilliance of the light of glory that enables all those who inherit the kingdom to behold the ineffable beauty of God.

THE IMPERISHABLE PAPACY

THE manifestation of God's will to man is the aim and end of the Church and the Papacy. And well has this glorious mission been accomplished. The faith and love professed by Peter were taught in turn to the universal world, which was fashioned in every age and clime to inexhaustible shapes of supernatural beauty. In this marvellous work of man's transfiguration and reproduction of Christ's life upon earth, the Church has to wage with the passions of men a fierce, unrelenting, and never-ending war. The Herods and Pilates reappear in history. The wicked enthroned in the higher places with bribes and menaces obstructed her path. She coped with the corruption of the Roman Empire, she grappled with the barbarians in deadly conflict, she closed in strife with the German emperors and struggled with the apostasy of old Christian nations. The Cross was the only arm she wielded. The way of the Cross was the path of the Papacy, the disciple followed in the wake of his Master. The Satan that wrestled of old with Job assaulted in turn the Vicegerent of Christ. Calvary, it is true, was succeeded by Thabor, but his triumphs were cemented in tears and blood. He who dwells in the heavens derided His foes. Repeatedly buried, he rose always again. Though often disregarded, he was never despised, for his power was unbounded to bind and to loose, and,

appointed by Christ as the foundation of His Church, he was necessarily predestined to share its immortality. Tyrants might rob him of his temporal crown, but they could not intimidate his invulnerable soul.

The Barque of Peter was to ride every storm, and steer securely through all sands and shoals. Christ had not chosen it or preferred it in vain, for Christ and the Church and the Pope were to be one. The Pope was to be the supernatural sun, the fount of the seven sacramental streams that flowed for the spiritual regeneration of the nations. Peter was to be the majestic tree, whose wide-spreading branches were to cover every land, the infallible voice resolving all doubts, the unfailing source of all truth and grace, the sovereign prince of the City of God. He holds the helm of the Ark of the Church, in which dwell all the privileged children of predestination. He is truly the mouthpiece of Eternal Truth, that never wavers in his solemn pronouncements, and signs and seals with divine authority the verdicts of all the Church's councils. He usurped no power in his palmiest days, but exerted it always to build up and to save. The ephemeral systems of philosophers' fancies and the fond romances of the scientists' dreams, like dynasties and empires, live their little lives, but Peter, though well nigh two thousand years old, is still ever green in immortal youth. No spot or wrinkle obscures his brow; he is always the same both yesterday and to-day and will persevere unchanged to the consummation of all. Though poor and uncrowned, he is not dishonoured. He rules supreme over millions of minds, and commands the affections of large multitudes of men. In the streets

of our cities and our public squares, in the schools and academies of the Old World and the New, and wherever in fine men assemble together, the Pope's peace proposals are on every tongue, the subject of debate by friend and foe, and creating a hope in the breasts of all men that the principles of right will soon triumph over might, that the monster of militarism will be ostracised for ever, that this conflict of Titans may be brought to a close, and peace and liberty assert their sovereignty and shine once again on a desolated world. Let his enemies endeavour to suppress him as they will, he dominates with ease all mere earthly sceptres; he is still the keystone of the spiritual arch, the tongue that voices all our noblest aspirations, the head and the front as in ages of faith of all true, genuine civilisation and progress. He has championed the sacramental character of marriage, he is ever the implacable enemy of divorce.. Heresies and schisms are the creatures of a day; the Oriental religions, like their mummies and icons, have a worship deprived of all movement and life, but the faith of the Fisherman of Rome never slumbers, but is awake and alive in the affairs of men.

THE PILOT OF THE STORM

As God was one in all His operations, so union is strength in the operations of men. Unity is the vision which enraptured the Psalmist when filled with the inspiration of the Spirit, he exclaimed in a transport of admiration, "Quam bonum et jucundum habitare fratres in unum," "How good and how pleasant a spectacle it is to see brothers dwelling in harmony together." These words were the echo of a far-off cry, "Thou art bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh," which Adam in the Garden addressed to Eve in the fresh golden morning of their creation. This community of origin was well known to Abraham when saluting Sarah as his sister, and to Assuerus again when he cried to Esther, "Am I not your brother?" Union with His creatures is God's ceaseless aspiration, and the grand culmination and repose of His works. It was this that Christ prayed for to His Heavenly Father in the noblest and sublimest of all human prayers. Neither Greek nor Roman nor exclusive nationality was to claim habitation in the City of God. By nature, by grace, and as children of Mother Church, by common participation in the Sacrament of Union, as in all the great treasures of the communion of saints, the unity of the Trinity has its beautiful reflection in the unity and variety of the Church upon earth.

The big heart of Paul, like the heart of the Saviour,

converted by gentleness Onesimus the slave, and fashioned him into the Bishop of Ephesus. At the Vatican Council black and white sat together. The title of co-heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven extinguished all minor social distinction and surpassed in effectiveness a thousand revolutions. Even Mirabeau himself was no ardent believer in the dream of equality and fraternity, for unity of religion is the only path that leads to the goal of international brotherhood, and the Gospel is the ever true charter of freedom. There is no new foundation for universal peace. Humanity and nationality must be blended into one. Religion is no interesting antique, no curious fossil, to be laid on the shelf as a memory of the past. Pelf, power, and politics are idols to be slain, with the phantoms and fallacies of innumerable creeds. Evil rulers have shattered the decalogue to shreds. Eternity is the measure for immortal souls and the only standard that can re-create the world. Conversion is the absolute condition of reconstruction. Honesty and honour and justice and truth must be henceforth realities in the lives of men. Morality is one for individuals and nations. Not for ruin, but salvation have kings received power. Blood of millions is a treasure not idly to be squandered as an instrument of hatred, of ambition and glory. Numbers cannot legalise murder and plunder, and success in wrong is no justification.

"Non occides, non furaberis," "Slay not, nor steal," are words of import that are spoken to all.

Not for wounded pride or the lust of greed, not for personal profit or selfish indulgence, have the peoples put trustees in the places of power. There

are Pilates still amongst us sending innocents to be crucified. But the knell of absolutism is heard on every breeze, and no mortal hand can arrest in its course the big wave of freedom that bursts on every shore. The autocracy of the future must be merit alone, and sincerity and straightforwardness the diplomacy of the nations. Amid the chaos that envelops the universal world there is one that rides Master on the wings of the storm.

Oh, Heavenly Pilot, who holdest the helm, oh, Thou who at will dost imprison the tempest and subdue at Thy pleasure the proud swelling wave, give rest to the wanderings of men's modern minds, and still the agitations of their fickle hearts, that the vessel of our destinies, so tossed and battered on the raging surf, may look up to Thee as the only Hand that can guide them securely to the port of salvation.

THE CHURCH AND CALVARY

CALVARY is the keynote to the life of the Church, and the lives of her sacred ministers are the reproductions of the life of their Master. The Barque of Peter has been in all times the sport of every hostile wind and wave, and all human forces and passions have ever been fiercely directed against her. Christ often allowed her apparent extinction, to exult, it would seem, in the glories of her resurrections. So furious at times was the violence of the storm that enemies clapped their hands and sang songs of triumph over the imagined victory of her downfall. But, when waters ran highest and the ship seemed submerged in the deep, she shook off the angry billows, and arose from her grave as her Master had done before her. Christ stretched out His saving hand, and the tempest was stilled. The world's "Song of Hate" never ceased in her ears. The "Te Deum" of thanksgiving was her unfailing reply. She was buried in the Catacombs, she was plunged in an ocean of blood, she was given up for dead; but the hour struck at last when the stone was rolled back, the sepulchre was flung open, and she came out victorious from the tomb.

In vain has she lavished her favours on the world, in vain has she built up the liberties of peoples, in vain has she consolidated all authority and consecrated all earthly power, in vain has she ennobled

woman and transfigured the marriage tie, in vain has she fostered with maternal care all genuine progress and civilisation. She was doomed by Providence to the fate of her Founder, to persecution and calumny, and to accomplish the words of the great King of Martyrs: "Si me persecuti sunt, sic et vos persequentur."

Her priests and her nuns were hunted from their homes, her beneficent influence was warded off from her schools—the Pope was the butt of every ignorant insulter; the "haughty Prelate" was the pet fiction of the silly romancer; while the zealous and laborious ministers of the Gospel in the accomplishment of the sacred duties of their charge had to suffer "the slings and arrows" of a slanderous world and the envenomed shafts of jealousy and envy. But in this there was proof that their mission was from God. Not their faults, but their virtues, were the targets for censure. For they preached a doctrine not welcomed by all, a God who was Personal and independent of men, and the decrees of whose justice were incorruptible and impartial.

They feared not to speak of punishments that were eternal, and, when needed, to proclaim without fear or favour their emphatic "non licet" to the Herods of their day. They told rulers and ruled their rights and their duties, and that both formed the foundation and the golden band of all society, that the highest were the humblest and that in the designs of God to serve was to reign, and all rule was based, as Bossuet tells us, on the equal service of all.

Sacrifice was the absolute and universal law binding both nations and individuals, and exacting its

voluntary or compulsory tribute some time or another from all without distinction. But to followers of Christ the very sight of the Cross had a power all its own. In the fires of persecution and the horrors of war, and even in the dark and dreadful hour of dissolution, it could shine like a brilliant star and light us cheerfully over the abyss.

THE WAR—AND AFTER

THE war is a great object lesson, presented to us by Providence for our instruction; and whether we reflect upon its cause, its progress, or its probable termination, we shall find abundant food for useful and salutary thought. It is, on the one hand, a mirror on a stupendous scale of all that is best and worst in human nature, and holds up to us therefore, in this double capacity, models to imitate and evil examples to avoid. Nations are, after all, only groups of individuals, and war is a time of revelations which exposes in its vast upheavals of society, secrets which, till then, were hidden in its womb. How grand and solemn loom up before our minds the sacred character of promises and pledges, and the overtowering supremacy of moral obligations, when we behold the united forces of a mighty empire rush together, from the ends of the earth, to pour out, in the one red stream of war, the blood of the best of her sons, in their gallant and determined defence! How hateful and hideous must appear in our eyes the self-sufficing character of the German professors, whose doctrines were the seeds that produced as a natural fruit these brutal cruelties, that will hand down the memory of the Kaiser from generation to generation, as the greatest monster of ancient or modern times. But the Nemesis of retribution is fast dogging his heels. The *Dies Iræ* is rapidly approach-

ing; the sands are running out. The cup of God's anger is rising to the brim. The sentence of his condemnation is stamped in fire, on the charred and crumbled walls of the cities he has laid desolate. Let us hope that the day is soon about to dawn, when the false and all-destroying culture of Germany, and her poisonous doctrine of militarism, shall be swept away for ever into oblivion, and the smaller nationalities in whose interest we profess to fight—the trinity of martyr nations, of Belgium, Poland, and Ireland, shall arise from the ashes and ruins of the past, and the nations from afar shall assemble in their crowds, to behold all the glories and the splendours of their resurrection. To secure such a happy consummation what factors, may we ask, will be needed for the palace of peace which we all are contemplating to build up in the future? What essentials must belong to that system of international arbitration which will remove from us for ever the possible prospect of a lunatic with a crown on his head running riot among the nations of the earth, wading deep in the blood of the millions, and spreading a storm of universal devastation upon the noblest cities and the grandest monuments that have ever been raised by the architectural genius of man?

No god of German manufacture must preside over the councils of that day, but the God of infinite and eternal love, the God of the Creation and the Redemption of all mankind. Then this ocean of blood will not have been poured out in vain. Both power and principle will be inseparably allied in all the Governments of men, justice and honour will be seated side by side in the high places of the land, to

administer with equity and impartiality the sacred trust of authority which has been imparted to them by God. The siren and fatal voices of flattery, which resound in the courts of princes and are heard in all the citadels of power, will be silenced and extinguished for ever. The adamantine bonds of unity and brotherhood which lie at the roots of all religion and civilisation will emerge from the purifying purgatory of war and all the cleansing fires of heroic sacrifices, and the power that tamed and transfigured the barbarians of old will roll back the tide of barbarism once more, and regenerate the world, by the all-powerful and ever-active spirit of Christianity.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

ON Pentecost our Holy Mother the Church turns all minds and hearts to the third Divine Person of the adorable Trinity, whom the Scripture describes in the infancy of the world as moving like a dove over the surface of the waters, and from darkness and chaos bringing gradually to light a world of magnificent order and harmony. This Person it was who inspired all the Prophets, and sanctified Mary to become Mother of God. It was He who descended upon the head of the Redeemer when baptised by John in the waters of the Jordan. Christ Himself declared it was expedient for Him to go; that the Paraclete might come to take His place among men. The last of the Persons not in time but in order, the expression of the love of the Father and the Son, they rested in Him as the eternal Sabbath and unruffled ocean of everlasting joy. His indwelling in us is superior in kind to His general omnipresence in all parts of creation. His breathing into the Apostles was indispensable for their mission, as His sacred fire was to David and the Evangelists. He is ever at work in the Sacraments of the Church, in the preaching and ministrations of the priesthood, and scatters His gifts throughout all creation, with the great profusion and prodigality of His love. The love Christ bears Him is so tender and deep that a sin against Him is the one that is not forgiven. His

mysterious overshadowing brought Our Saviour into the world; His succession was necessary to consummate His work.

He consoles bleeding hearts in trial and affliction, and braces up natures that lose courage in the strife. He whispers to the soul like a gentle breeze, or the song of a bird that sings up in the sky. Though pleading as a rule with long-suffering patience, He often sweeps those He especially loves, with compelling force, up the rugged heights that lead to perfection. Fidelity brings new caresses of His love and divinest touches of His presence in prayer. Like a skilful sculptor on the marble block, He fashions all the saints into images of His beauty; like consuming fire He purifies the gold, and all spiritual transformations are the workings of His power. His visits are sunshine in the desert of life. He is gentle as the dove with a spell that is irresistible; He is mighty as the storm bending giants of the forest, and lashing the billows of ocean into foam. His operations are more beautiful than the hues of the morning, or the gold and purple of the evening skies. He is further the Spirit of tranquillity and peace who alone can subdue the great tempest of strife.

The supernatural world is the theatre of His labours and the supernatural only can save us to-day. The prime use of matter is to serve the spirit; the visible is a ladder to reach the invisible. The world which passes is a shadow of the one more abiding, and the civilisation which is based on mere material wealth is a mirage of vain hopes and foolish expectations. We must reinstate the long-slighted standards of the Gospel and restore the reality of a vanished

faith. Let the world take its place in the sun of God's light and the windows of the soul be flung open to the Spirit. Truth and justice are the roads that lead us to true progress; the house of the future must be built by the Lord. A moral renaissance is the want of the age; the reconstruction of the future must be based on the Spirit. The canker of selfishness must be finally and for ever destroyed. The lesson taught by Germany must be turned to account; that culture without character leads only to disaster.

Inordinate accumulations in the hands of the few must yield to a juster and more equal distribution. The interests of mankind transcend those of nations. The happiness of all the great brotherhood of humanity, without any distinction of country or race, is the only ambition that is worthy of a people, for all of whom without exception the Creator of the universe paid the ransom of His Blood and opened wide the gates of His Heavenly Kingdom.

THE TEACHING OF THE TONGUES

WHIT-SUNDAY is the anniversary of the coming of the Holy Ghost, who came to consummate the work that had been begun by God the Father in Creation, was continued by the Son in the Incarnation, and was brought to its final culmination by His own personal indwelling in the Church to enlighten her and to sanctify her to the end of time. On the coming of the Holy Ghost the great luminaries of antiquity lost their lesser lustre in the light of Christianity. The oracles were reduced to silence, and the Hebrew lights themselves became pale and dim. The sublime strains of Isaias and the tragic pathos of Jeremias were extinguished, as it were, in the more dazzling splendour of the Pentecostal fires, and all that was greatest and loftiest in the wisdom of old surrendered and yielded the sceptre to a power that was never felt, and a voice that was never heard, before. The fabled accents of Orpheus were but discord to the sweet and gentle teachings of Christianity, which subdued, on the one hand, the pride of the haughty Roman, and charmed into voluntary submission the rugged and obstinate nature of the Vandal and the Hun. A new Heaven was created which fascinated the minds of men, and a new Spring arose to rejuvenate the world. The Apostles, all assembled together, were a fitting symbol of the new

creation, and the future brotherhood of nations and of men.

The noise as of a mighty wind that filled the house of the Apostles foreshadowed the preaching of the Gospel, which was destined to overleap all barriers, both on land and sea, and, like a huge conflagration, wrap up the whole earth in its all-consuming flame. From Jerusalem to Asia Minor, from Athens to Rome and Alexandria, it sped in its triumphant course. All East and West submitted to its sway, till the Apostles could exclaim with no idle boast, in the words of the Roman poet, "Quae regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?" No wind was this that, bent on destruction, was to hurl big vessels to their ruin, but a gentle zephyr with healing on its wings, a favourable breeze to fill the swelling sail and bring the brave ship securely into port. These tongues of fire which sat upon the Apostles were the emblems of that charity that was henceforth to rule the world. The law of fear had hitherto dominated the earth, but love was the power that was now to wield the sceptre. No physical force can take the citadel of the soul. The despot has no root in the order of nature or of grace. A mere servile obedience has no solid security. The heroes of God's army build their conquests on love.

Let us pour out to-day our supplications to God, that the gifts of His Spirit may be granted to our souls. Let us pray that His wisdom be imparted to rulers on whose words and whose deeds hang the destinies of men. May justice and truth control all their actions, and example lend authority to enforce their mandates. Let no song of hate be heard sing-

ing in their hearts, no revenge or jealousy be prime movers of their deeds. The rule of the wicked has wrecked multitudes of souls. May all priests and peoples have possession in abundance of the science of the Faith, the foundations of the belief we profess, and the reasons that build up our immortal hopes. For us who have the compass of Revelation, we can launch without fear into the sea of investigation and steer clear of the quicksands that handicap the unbeliever. We are freer to capture what is apprehensible by reason, when the bright star of faith illumines our path. Let us spare no efforts in the great cause of truth, and when night creeps on and man works no longer, when the shadows are lengthening and the end is nigh, it will help us to feel we have shared, though humbly, in the fight of the Faith, and we may look with more confidence to the great Comforter of our souls, and breathe with our dying lips the words of the hymn:

"Consolator optime,
Dulcis hospes animae,
Dulce refrigerium."

THE CRADLE OF GENIUS

"IN doing good let us not fail" was in brief the programme and the achievement of God's Church during the nineteen centuries of her troubled existence. Like Jesus Christ, her Omnipotent Founder, she was always doing good; and bodies and souls were both objects of her care. The fountain of charity, which was sealed to the ancients, ever poured out its refreshing waters in her midst. The beloved of her heart were the suffering and the poor. The infanticide and slavery that prevailed among the pagans were replaced by hospitality in the lives of her children. The saints ransomed captives with their money and their lives, and the lepers were recipients of their tenderest solicitude. The Sisters of St. Augustine nursed invalids in the Hôtel-Dieu with a heroism of endurance which knew no limitation, though the vilest ingratitude was too often their reward. The brave, valiant daughters of St. Vincent de Paul became mothers to the children in the place of the mothers who had given them birth. But the Church, who poured oil on the wounds of the body, never failed to attend to the wants of the soul. The erudite children of the Order of St. Benedict and the myriad-minded sons of the great St. Ignatius were magnificent illustrations of her intellectual power. Her princes and priests and her zealous prelates established universities that were seats of all learning. It was Alcuin's aspiration to make France another

Athens. Men like Boileau and Casaubon came from Paris University, the genius of Newton germinated in Cambridge, and Oxford gave birth to Bacon and Thomas More. Calmet and Mabillon were the glories of St. Benedict, and Bourdaloue and Petavius were the splendours of Christianity. The martyrs that evangelised the natives of Canada, and the marvellous missions of Paraguay, and China, go to make up the noblest records in our history.

What a contrast we find in Mahomet and Confucius, whose religions are stricken with everlasting sterility! Rome was the harbour that shielded in her bosom the refugees of learning from every shore. In Rome Michel Angelo raised the cupola of St. Peter's, and Raphael's inspirations decked the galleries of the Vatican. Academies were founded by enlightened Popes for the special studies of Aristotle and Plato, and the masterpieces in art of Praxiteles and Phidias were purchased, at high prices, to adorn and ennoble the first palaces of the land. The Pantheon owes its life to the consecration of Christianity, and the Column of Trajan to the statue on its summit. Barthelemy interpreted the manuscripts of Herculaneum, and Mozzochi the legislative tables of Heraclius. Most discoveries and inventions emanated from the Church. The kings of the intellect, the pioneers of exploration, distinguished mathematicians, naturalists, and astronomers sprang up in the Church, as in congenial soil, which imposes on her ministers as a necessary qualification to shine out conspicuous in knowledge as in virtue. Pope Pius VI. rivalled the deeds of Augustus, and the clearing of the marshes and repairs of the aqueducts are monuments of his indefatigable labours.

The eloquent demonstrations of our glorious faith, enshrined in the languages of Virgil and Homer, were no feeble instruments in preserving to the world the invaluable treasures of antiquity. Take them all in all, the Popes were the benefactors and saviours of the world, when labouring in the violent throes of reconstruction. The exceptions were few and far between, and only serve to make manifest "it is human to err," that "men, not angels, are the ministers of the Gospel," and that no position, however exalted it may be, can guarantee in any of the descendants of Adam a certain escape from the consequences of the Fall. Rome has doubtless exerted in the history of the past a great moral empire over multitudes of men. That power, though obscured, is still living to-day, and Benedict XV. may restore in our time, so big with destiny, the vast spiritual supremacy which made Innocent III. and Gregory VII. such powerful engines in the reformation of the world. It was not in colleges and hospitals only that was witnessed the beneficent influence of religion. The riches that accrued to the churches and monasteries were legitimate fruits of the work of their hands. Molesme and Citeaux, once dreary and desolate, were converted into champagnes that teemed with fertility, and the rude barren soil became gardens and orchards, that exulted in the opulence of their golden harvests. St. Bernard and his followers in the valleys of Champagne, St. Columbanus in the wastes of the Vosges, the Benedictine monks on the banks of the Tagus, and in gloomy solitudes around Monte Cassino, made deserts to bloom and the wilderness to smile, in the copious riches of all fruits and flowers.

CHRIST THE CORNER-STONE

THE faith that healed the Centurion of old has the same magic power to-day of binding up the wounds of the suffering nations whose life-blood is ebbing out on the crimsoned battlefields of Europe. It is still the rock of repose for the erring mind of man, and the fickle wayward affections of his restless heart. The Incarnation, that triumph of God's infinite love, and of the believing faculty in man, is the universal rendezvous to which bruised and tormented humanity must always repair, as in holy pilgrimage, when the chalice of tribulation is presented to its lips, and the shadow of the Crucified is flung across its path. In the dark days of sorrow our faith is more valuable than gold, and its light dims the lustre of the diamond and the ruby. The sun of the soul, it knows no eclipse; the infallible judge, it knows no appeal; the oracle of truth, it has never wavered to the seductions of evil, or to all the many tempting voices of corruption. To seek it is more precious than the search for the Poles or the quest of the Holy Grail. All the promises of wealth are but scraps of paper, but faith never fails its followers. Its kingdom outshines all the splendour of earth. It flashes its radiance through the horrors of war, and reveals the great purpose that may run through all; the Providence that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we may; the God that can weave out of blood

and tears a garland of immortality for His Elect. While it strips of its pomp all military show, it waves above battles God's standard of peace. It sends floating high above the surges of conflict and its deafening din the voices of its indestructible *credo*, proclaiming the patriotism is not all; that revenge and ambition are the enemies we have to fight, and the forces that, if unsubdued, would change the world into a charnel-house and a chamber of horrors.

Faith alone can satisfy all the hungers of the soul. No hollow title, no tinsel robe, no shining armour can supply the place of the life it inspires. It alone can band with its golden links both men and nations together. It alone can arrest the strikes of labour and bring classes and masses, the rich and the poor, the employer and the employed, the master and the servant, the weak and the strong, into the grand Catholic brotherhood of men. It can realise the progress that science could not accomplish, nor all the vain efforts of the philosopher and the philanthropist. Established on a rock more impregnable than the Alps, its titanic strength has bowed down into subjection the mightiest intellects, and captivated into sanctity all the races of mankind. Humanity, and freedom, and justice, and truth, are the virtues that spring up abundant in its soil, that give strength to all human compacts, and are causes for which men are ever willing to die. No fraud, no flattery can survive in its presence, no Pharisee or hypocrite can tolerate its light.

For the eye of God, which conscience keeps open, pierces all disguises and needs no X-ray to see behind the mask. Its maxims are the paradise of the good,

and the accusing voices of the wicked. Must these life-giving lessons of our glorious faith be now flung ignominiously to the winds, to make way for the teachings of a shallow culture, which attends to the intellect but ignores the soul? Shall the structure of civilisation and the fabric of human happiness, that our fathers have been building for 2,000 years, be now shattered at a blow and reduced to ashes by the uncontrollable lust of conquest, and the over-vaulting ambition of a single man? At this critical hour in the history of our race when the world is being rocked to its foundations, the failures of the past should be the landmarks for the future, the everlasting issues and horizons of eternity should be cleared of obscuration, the kingdom of conscience should resume its sway, all nations and rulers, as well as individuals, should admit their obligations as well as their rights, the goods of God's world should not fall to the few but the earth should belong to all the children of men. The crumbling world must be built up again, by the power that has built it before.

We must go back to Christ, or return to the chaos of its infancy. We must lay the foundations that alone can be laid, for a new world of real prosperity and peace. The edifice of wealth and material splendour that has been accumulating for ages can be shrivelled up in an instant by the first fiery blast of war.

May the hands and brains that have been building hitherto those great floating fortresses of the sea, and those monster vultures that sweep the higher regions of the air, together with those marvellous

vessels that, like ravenous sharks, court the caverns of the deep, devote henceforth their genius and skill to the building of a world of permanent peace. Let us call in the darkness and the depth of our affliction upon Him who calmed of old the troubled waters of the lake to come again over the raging billows and bid the swelling waves be still.

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